

# Grammy's female CEO sues Recording Academy over her dismissal

 [foxbusiness.com/money/grammys-ceo-sues-over-dismissal](https://www.foxbusiness.com/money/grammys-ceo-sues-over-dismissal)

Brittany De  
Lea

Former Grammy chief Deborah Dugan, the group's first female CEO and president, filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on Tuesday after she was dismissed from her leadership role last week.

Dugan's attorneys released a statement about the complaint, which alleged discrimination and called the move retaliation.

"The complaint that we filed today against the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (the Grammys) highlights tactics reminiscent of those deployed by individuals defending Harvey Weinstein," her attorneys wrote. "As we allege, the attempt by the Recording Academy to impugn the character of Deborah Dugan is a transparent effort to shift the focus away from its own unlawful activity. This blatant form of retaliation in corporate America is all too common, even post #MeToo, and we will utilize all lawful means necessary to ensure that those responsible are held accountable for their actions."

Ten days prior to the award show it was announced that Dugan was placed on administrative leave over alleged misconduct.

The New York Times was the first to report that a complaint had been filed accusing Dugan of employing a bullying management style and acting in a "hostile manner" toward an executive assistant.

Dugan's camp alleges in the suit that her removal was actually based on an email she sent to human resources that detailed complaints of sexual harassment against a man serving as general counsel to the Academy.

Three weeks prior to her dismissal, Dugan had purportedly sent the email to the academy's head of human resources regarding not only her sexual harassment claims, but also concerns about the governance at the organization, including voting irregularities, financial mismanagement and conflicts of interest. The email also allegedly characterized the culture at the Academy as a "boy's club," according to the complaint.

She notified the group in December that she planned to pursue legal claims. Negotiations ensued and a settlement was nearly reached, but the Academy alleged pulled back and presented her with a different deal she was not prepared to accept. After the deadline for

her acceptance expired, she was "immediately" put on administrative leave, according to the legal filing.

Dugan had only been at the helm of the organization for about six months. According to the suit, she also intends to file a whistleblower complaint.

A representative for the Recording Academy said the group immediately launched independent investigations to review Dugan's potential misconduct and allegations, which remain ongoing.

"Ms. Dugan was placed on administrative leave only after offering to step down and demanding \$22 million from the Academy, which is a not-for-profit organization," the Academy said in a statement to FOX Business. "Our loyalty will always be to the 21,000 members of the Recording Industry. We regret that Music's Biggest Night is being stolen from them by Ms. Dugan's actions and we are working to resolve the matter as quickly as possible."

The Academy also said that it is "curious" that Dugan never "raised these grave allegations until a week after legal claims were made against her." The group says she also directed human resources not to act in response to her concerns.

Dugan succeeded Neil Portnow, who led the Grammys since 2002.