

Wigdor LLP is Going to Trial in a Pregnancy Discrimination Case Against Steampunk, Inc (formerly SE Solutions)

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Wigdor LLP is preparing to go to trial on August 21, 2023 against Steampunk, Inc. in Alexandria, VA federal court in a pregnancy discrimination and retaliation case filed by Kathleen Abrey (a former SVP with that company).

As alleged by Plaintiff, Steampunk is accused of discrimination for terminating Kathleen Abrey just months after demoting her on the first day that she returned from maternity leave. The company replaced her in her previous executive leadership position with a male employee whom she had hired and supervised before her leave. Steampunk's CEO, Matthew Warren, and other members of executive management marginalized Ms. Abrey and did not tell her of the change in her role before she got back from leave, and their attitudes towards her markedly changed upon her pregnancy announcement (for example, expressing skepticism that she would come back to work) and she was met with intensified scrutiny and criticism after her return. When Ms. Abrey objected to the demotion and called it discriminatory to her managers and other colleagues, she was warned not to say such things again and that such talk was "fighting words." After Ms. Abrey returned from leave, the CEO Mr. Warren began telling her that she was too "nurturing" and that she had supposedly lost her "sharp elbows" since giving birth to her child, among other comments displaying a new, discriminatory disdain for Ms. Abrey.

Barely six months after she came back from leave, when she complained to Mr. Warren and the Company's COO about apparent discrimination against a pregnant female job candidate and compared the situation to what happened to her, she was terminated first thing the next morning. As part of her termination, the Company stripped Ms. Abrey of her 4% equity stake in the Company, for which she left a secure and lucrative post at Accenture.

The federal complaint can be read [here](#).