

'I was devastated': Forever 21 transgender worker 'branded disgusting by bosses while transitioning into a woman'

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The 22-year-old claims she was told she was a better worker "when you were a guy, but not anymore", and was then fired without explanation



A woman working for **Forever 21** was mocked by her childish bosses, who branded her "disgusting" while transitioning into a woman, according to court papers.

Alexia Daskalakis, who is now suing her former employer, claims she was told: "You used to be a hard worker when you were a guy, but not anymore."

The 22-year-old was then fired without being given a reason.



'It hurt': Former Forever 21 transgender employee Alexia Daskalakis

Speaking to New York Daily News, she said: "I was devastated.

"You put all your hard work into working for one company, and they respond by being ruthless."

Alexia went by her former name of Anthony Daskalakis when she first took the Brooklyn job as a sales associate.

She began working there four years ago, later being promoted to visual merchandiser at the worldwide high street clothing store.



Employment row: The former worker is taking bosses to court

But she began experiencing issues in January last year.

She informed her boss that she was **transitioning to a woman**, and from then on started dressing in a more feminine manner.

She added: "I always played with Barbie dolls, and wore my mom's high heels and clothes.

"I wrestled with it.

"I work hard. I figured my work ethic could trump any discrimination."

But while co-workers were supportive of her new direction at work, she felt her bosses were less encouraging.

Boss Patrick Walmsley began treating her with "increasing contempt" - criticising her work in the office and calling her "useless", it is claimed.



'Treated with contempt': Alexia Daskalakis

After undertaking hormone treatment, Walmsley pointed out to her that she was dressing in an inappropriate manner during a night shift.

The court papers claim he said: "You're still a male, so you need to abide by the male dress code."

She claims that she contacted human resources about her concerns, but that they never returned her calls.

Daskalakis' lawyer, David Gottlieb, said: "The transgender community faces a variety of challenges, and it is disgraceful for employers to create additional hardship by discriminating against employees simply because of how they express and identify their gender."

The court papers were filed on Wednesday, with a demand for an unknown amount of money.