

Fox News Fires Bob Beckel Over "Insensitive Remark to an African-American Employee"

 hollywoodreporter.com/news/fox-news-fires-bob-beckel-insensitive-remark-an-african-american-employee-1005464



8:49 AM PDT 5/19/2017 by Erik Hayden

This is the second time the personality has been dropped by the network.

Fox News has dropped host Bob Beckel for the second time in two years.

"Bob Beckel was terminated today for making an insensitive remark to an African-American employee," a Fox News spokesperson stated on Friday, without elaborating on the background of the incident.

Douglas Wigdor, whose firm Wigdor LLP represents clients who've filed complaints against Fox News, circulated his version of events. "Mr. Beckel stormed out of his office when our client, a Black IT employee, came to service his computer, telling our client that he was leaving his office because he is Black," Wigdor said in a statement.

Wigdor added: "To make matters worse, after our client lodged a complaint about Mr. Beckel's racist behavior, Mr. Beckel, in front of Chief Human Resource Officer Kevin Lord, attempted to intimidate our client and persuade him to withdraw his complaint. Because he would not do so, Fox, in what has now become common place, leaked the story on a Friday to minimize the attention drawn to Mr. Beckel's racist behavior."

A Fox News spokesperson disputed the claim that the attorney's client was asked to withdraw a complaint.

"As Mr. Wigdor knows, Fox News made the decision to terminate Mr. Beckel after a prompt and thorough investigation. His client raised the complaint to Kevin Lord, EVP Human Resources, on Tuesday evening via email and within 7 minutes Mr. Lord responded and began the investigation," a Fox News spokesperson said. "Today, Fox

News delivered that message to Mr. Beckel and facilitated an apology from Mr. Beckel to the employee minutes after he was terminated. No one tried to persuade Mr. Wigdor's client to withdraw his complaint."

Beckel, who had been a co-host on *The Five*, had also been let go by the network in June 2015. The commentator rejoined the network in January and Fox News chairman Rupert Murdoch said at the time that he was "missed" by fans of the network.

His rocky tenures had included making headlines for deeming a *Bachelorette* star a "slut," cat-calling a viral video star and using the term "Chinamen" in a segment about Chinese hackers.

Beckel exits in the shadow of a tumultuous year for Fox News. Star anchor Bill O'Reilly was dropped by the network in April after *The New York Times* detailed \$13 million in settlements paid out by the personality over a decade.

And Fox News co-president Bill Shine, who had been accused of covering up harassment allegations for ousted chief Roger Ailes, resigned on May 1. The network has undergone several programming and behind-the-scenes talent shuffles as it reels from executive losses and multiple lawsuits.

May 19, 10:45 am Updated with additional statements.