

Fox News fires Bob Beckel for racially insensitive remark

usatoday.com/story/money/2017/05/19/fox-news-fires-bob-beckel-racially-insensitive-remark/101887538/

5/19/2017

David Bauder, The Associated Press Published 4:33 p.m. ET May 19, 2017 | Updated 5:45 p.m. ET May 19, 2017



On Friday, Fox News confirmed that it has fired commentator Bob Beckel for making an insensitive remark to a black employee. USA TODAY

NEW YORK — Fox News Channel said Friday that it had fired liberal commentator Bob Beckel for making a racially insensitive remark to a black employee.

Fox offered no details on the case, but a lawyer for the employee said Beckel had “stormed out” of his office Tuesday when the man, who is a technician, came to do work on his computer, saying he was leaving because the worker was black.

The lawyer, Douglas Wigdor, also said that Beckel attempted to intimidate his client and get him to withdraw his complaint in a meeting Friday with Fox executive Kevin Lord. Fox denied that anyone tried to persuade the man to withdraw his complaint, and said that Beckel had apologized to him after he was fired.

Beckel, 68, is a veteran Democratic political strategist who is a regular on Fox’s *The Five*, where he discusses stories with four conservative panelists. The show recently moved into Fox’s prime-time lineup with the firing of Bill O’Reilly.

Beckel had only returned to Fox in January. He’d been ousted in June 2015 while dealing with substance abuse, with then-Fox executive Bill Shine saying Fox “couldn’t hold *The Five* hostage to one man’s personal issues.” Beckel subsequently wrote a book *I Should Be Dead: My Life Surviving Politics, TV and Addiction*.

Wigdor currently represents 22 clients with cases against Fox, including 15 involved in a lawsuit alleging racist behavior by the network’s since-fired controller, Judith Slater, who denies the charges.

Fox is involved in several legal cases involving O’Reilly and the late former network chairman Roger Ailes, who died on Thursday.

Wigdor's firm, in a statement, said that "we intend on holding (Fox News parent company) 21st Century Fox accountable for these actions and will be filing multiple other complaints in other matters next week."