

Another Fox News Lawsuit: Staffer Says She Was Fired After Using Harassment Hotline

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A former Fox News Radio correspondent filed a lawsuit on Thursday, claiming she was fired after using the hotline set up for employees to report cases of sexual harassment.

Jessica Golloher claims she was fired 24 hours after utilizing the “hotline” that was set up on the heels of on-going sexual harassment allegations that have resulted in founding CEO Roger Ailes, co-president Bill Shine and star Bill O’Reilly’s exit from the network.

Golloher filed the suit in New York State Supreme Court and names 21st Century Fox, Fox News, Fox News Radio Network vice president Mitch Davis and Director of News Programming Hank Weinbloom as defendants.

“Putting aside the fact that very few employees were even aware that a hotline existed prior to its mention in recent press accounts, Jessica Golloher, Fox News Radio Network’s Middle East/North Africa correspondent, did summon the courage, on April 17, 2017, to email 21st Century Fox’s purported independent investigator and request an opportunity to speak with her regarding issues at Fox,” the plaintiff claims in court documents obtained by TheWrap.

The suit continues: “Within 24 hours of sending this email, and knowing that Ms. Golloher had previously made internal complaints about gender discrimination, Ms. Golloher was, without any prior warning, fired – effective August 2017. The decision to terminate Ms. Golloher can only be described as a blatant act of retaliation.”

Fox denied the allegations, saying in a statement obtained by TheWrap that “Jessica Golloher’s claims are without merit. Her allegations of discrimination and retaliation are baseless. We will vigorously defend the matter.”

Fox did not provide further details, but a person familiar with the matter told TheWrap that her position was eliminated due to broader budget cuts at Fox News Radio.

Golloher’s lawsuit states that Fox claiming she was going to be let go before sending the email would be “preposterous” because she had recently participated in numerous meetings and discussed numerous assignments that “assumed her continued employment” at Fox News Radio.

“Simply put, any purported desire on the part of Fox to clean up its culture and actually encourage employees to come forward with complaints about discrimination in the workplace is nothing more than a move to salvage its reputation,” according to the lawsuit.

The lawsuit states, “Repeatedly throughout her work for Fox, Ms. Golloher was marginalized and subject to discrimination based on her gender.” Golloher claims she was passed over as lead reporter for the 2014 Olympics in Sochi, Russia based on her gender and offers various other examples of being passed over for male colleagues.

The suit also accuses Fox News Radio anchor and producer Dave Anthony of “speaking down to her” but she “never heard Mr. Anthony patronize or speak down to similarly- situated male reporters.”

Golloher claims that she didn’t feel complaining to Human Resources at Fox News was a “viable option” because she “heard that HR was not to be trusted as it had repeatedly failed to assist employees with valid concerns.”

Golloher was the Middle East/North African correspondent, based in Jerusalem. The former correspondent seeks declaratory, injunctive and equitable relief, and monetary damages.