


Ernst & Young partner files sexual harassment claim against firm after alleging 2015 groping

 [cnbc.com/2018/04/18/ernst-young-partner-files-sexual-harassment-claim-against-firm.html](https://www.cnbc.com/2018/04/18/ernst-young-partner-files-sexual-harassment-claim-against-firm.html)

Leslie Picker

An Ernst & Young partner brought a claim against the firm, describing an event where she was assaulted and harassed by a male colleague, according to a filing with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on Wednesday.

Jessica Casucci said in the claim that a male partner groped her breasts and rear end and told her that he wanted to "f— her" and give her "the best night of [her] life" at a company event in Orlando in 2015. She said two other male partners stood by and did not intervene.

Casucci reported the conduct at the time to EY's Global Diversity & Inclusiveness Officer, according to the claim. Subsequently, Casucci said that her complaint was never documented nor were there any repercussions taken against the male partner.

Casucci said that she sought to distance herself from the male partner, including declining work where she thought he might be involved.

"In this day and age, when a woman shows the courage to stand up and complain about physical sexual harassment at work, one would expect her complaint to be treated with the utmost care and urgency," said Michael Willemin, partner at Wigdor, which brought the charge on behalf of Casucci. "We intend to send a message that there are consequences for companies who choose to protect male harassers rather than female victims of sexual harassment."

Casucci's complaint is the latest to put a spotlight on the work environment for women amid the #MeToo movement. Women represent only 22 percent of partners in CPA accounting firms, although two out of the big four firms — Deloitte and KPMG — have women chief executives.

EY said in response to the claim that it was "committed to a workplace free of discrimination and harassment of any kind."

"The individual who is the subject of the charge has been placed on administrative leave pending the completion of our investigation," a representative for EY said in a statement. "We take all allegations of sexual harassment seriously."

"Once we conclude our investigation, strong disciplinary actions will be taken against anyone we determine to have violated our policies, and/or our Code of Conduct," the representative said.