

Judge recommends 'Taxi King' pay \$1.3M in sex harassment case

By Andrew Keshner



Evgeny (Gene) Freidman should pay a former worker \$1.3 million for sexual harassment, a judge ruled. (Cook County Sheriff)

The Taxi King is not only a crook but also a perv, according to a Brooklyn judge's ruling.

Evgeny (Gene) Freidman has a new set of legal problems and payouts — \$1.3 million in recommended damages, economic losses and fees to a worker he allegedly sexually harassed, the Daily News has learned.

On Monday, Brooklyn Federal Magistrate Judge Vera Scanlon recommended the so-called "Taxi King" pay the princely sum to former employee Elaine Gutierrez.

Freidman already pleaded guilty in May to felony tax fraud for not paying \$5 million in taxes on his business. He was once in the medallion business with lawyer Michael Cohen, and has denied reports he's dishing to the feds on President Trump's former consigliere.

In the harassment case, Scanlon said Freidman commented constantly on Gutierrez's body and appearance, even once in front of the woman's 10-year-old daughter.

Scanlon said Freidman "acted with malice and reckless indifference" to Gutierrez's rights. Gutierrez, 40, worked for Freidman from 2015 to 2016, but Scanlon said she was still "visibly upset" when talking recently about her treatment.

Freidman also got smacked for his foul mouth in the harassment proceedings, according to court papers. Scanlon fined him an additional \$1,000 because Freidman got vulgar when dealing with Gutierrez's lawyer.

"My answer to u on all will b go f- -k urself! [Is] that sufficient for [m]eet and confer?" Freidman wrote at one point before defaulting in the litigation.

It's not checkmate for the crass king just yet. Another judge must sign off on Scanlon's recommendations.

Still, Gutierrez's lawyer, Lawrence Pearson, called the ruling "a big step forward." He said the hefty damages award was a warning shot that "employers will face serious consequences for discrimination and retaliation, and that the law provides for strong deterrence of malicious conduct like that of Mr. Freidman."

Freidman could not be reached for comment.