

Ex-WeWork CEO accused of gender discrimination, smoking marijuana in front of pregnant staffer

 [cnbc.com/2019/10/31/ex-wework-ceo-accused-of-gender-discrimination-in-new-lawsuit.html](https://www.cnbc.com/2019/10/31/ex-wework-ceo-accused-of-gender-discrimination-in-new-lawsuit.html)

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- Adam Neumann's former chief of staff is suing The We Company for allegedly sustaining a substantial gender pay gap, among other accusations.
- The suit alleges Neumann asked the former employee about her plans to get pregnant during a 2013 job interview and repeatedly called her maternity leave a "vacation."
- A spokesperson said, "WeWork intends to vigorously defend itself against this claim."

Adam Neumann now faces a new legal challenge even after being ousted as CEO from WeWork.

Neumann's former chief of staff is suing The We Company for allegedly sustaining a substantial gender pay gap, smoking marijuana in front of her and discriminating against her and other women for becoming pregnant and taking maternity leave, among other allegations.

The complaint alleges that former WeWork employee Medina Bardhi received significantly lower pay than her male peers.

According to the lawsuit, a new male hire for the chief of staff position with the "same job scope and role" as Bardhi's "was offered an annual salary of \$400,000 with a \$175,000 signing bonus payable in January 2017, far more than double the annual salary of \$150,000 that Ms. Bardhi was being paid in the same job."

Neumann also allegedly asked Bardhi about her plans to get married and become pregnant during her Oct. 2013 interview, according to the lawsuit, and later referred to her maternity leave as a "vacation" on multiple occasions.

The complaint also alleges Bardhi was "forced" to tell her boss about her pregnancy "because she knew she had to explain why she could no longer accompany Mr. Neumann on business travel, particularly due to his penchant for bringing marijuana on chartered flights and smoking it throughout the flight while in the enclosed cabin." The suit alleges that Neuman smoked marijuana on a private flight in front of Bardhi a week before she told him she was pregnant.

A WeWork spokesperson said in a statement, "WeWork intends to vigorously defend itself against this claim. We have zero tolerance for discrimination of any kind. We are committed to moving the company forward and building a company and culture that our employees can be proud of."

-CNBC's Laura Batchelor contributed to this report.