

# Deborah Dugan Ramps Up Retaliation Complaint After Recording Academy Termination

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Deborah Dugan has filed an updated complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission following a decision by the Recording Academy's board to terminate her.

The ugly public fight between Dugan and her former employer began the week before the Grammys when she was suspended amid allegations of workplace bullying and responded with an explosive EEOC complaint that alleged a culture of misogyny and a corrupt awards voting procedure. Then the Academy filed an arbitration complaint that alleges Dugan breached her employment contract and fiduciary duties.

In its announcement of her termination, the Academy said it was compelled to dismiss her despite settlement discussions because it "could not reward her with a lucrative settlement and thereby set a precedent that behavior like hers has no consequence."

Dugan on Tuesday submitted to the EEOC a 23-page supplement, along with more than 100 pages of exhibits.

Her lawyers argue the arbitration complaint is "completely frivolous." They characterize the allegations against her as such: Dugan made little effort to understand the Academy's culture; hired consultants without board approval; pushed forward an office renovation without approval; didn't speak well at a televised event; failed to accept board criticisms and mandates; and accessed and disclosed "confidential" information. Dugan maintains none of this is true.

"[S]ince Ms. Dugan filed her Charge, the Academy has done nothing but try to eviscerate her reputation and destroy her career," states the filing, which is posted below. "[T]he real reason that Ms. Dugan has been terminated is clear: she was willing to stand up and fight against the Academy's boys' club environment, sexual harassment, gender and race discrimination, self-dealing, conflicts of interest and award nomination voting irregularities, among other misogynistic misconduct."

The complaint also alleges that Proskauer Rose, the firm hired by the Academy to handle this dispute, "handpicked" the person hired to investigate Dugan's claims to HR. Dugan's lawyers claim the firm "frequently facilitates retaliatory litigation." (Proskauer didn't immediately reply to a request for comment.)

The filing also says that Dugan has emails proving her allegation that the Grammy nomination process is "rife with voting irregularities" — including one from a board member who wrote "I think we need to look at the 'add ons' that the Nomination review has the

power to use. At the moment they can basically pick their own nominees." She also says she has an email from Grammys producer Ken Ehrlich that enforces her claim that he pressured the Academy to nominate a particular superstar so that person would be more likely to perform during the show.

"In all of our collective years of practice, this is the most blatant act of retaliation we have ever encountered, and it represents the antithesis of all of the progress society has made on issues of discrimination and harassment in the past number of years," said Dugan's attorneys Douglas Wigdor and Michael J. Willemin in a Tuesday statement.

"The first we heard of supplements to her initial EEOC complaints was when media sent it to us," The Academy said in a response on Tuesday. "It is deeply disappointing and concerning that the EEOC process is being manipulated in this way. We will review these allegations along with the others and respond in due course."