


Former SoulCycle exec sues company for discrimination after she was fired 32 days after giving birth

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- **Jordan Kafenbaum filed a lawsuit against Soul Cycle on Tuesday accusing the company of discrimination**
- **The former senior director of instructor programming and talent management claims she was demoted after she announced her pregnancy in August 2019**
- **She says the company then fired her on April 27 - 32 days after she gave birth - claiming it had eliminated her position due to the coronavirus pandemic**
- **Kafenbaum however, claims the company has a pattern of firing employees who go on maternity leave**

A former SoulCycle executive has accused the company of discrimination, claiming she was demoted after announcing her pregnancy, before being fired 32 days after giving birth.

Jordan Kafenbaum, the former senior director of instructor programming and talent management, filed a lawsuit against SoulCycle interim CEO Sunder Reddy and former people officer Adrienne Gemperle, in Manhattan federal court on Tuesday.

Kafenbaum, who was responsible for overseeing almost 400 employees, says she was fired on April 27 - four weeks into her maternity leave - after the company claimed it was eliminating her position due to the financial impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Kafenbaum, however, has accused her former employer of 'blatant pregnancy discrimination and retaliation', claiming she was slowly pushed out of her role after she complained about a senior executive who made 'disparaging' comments about her pregnancy to other members of staff.

In a lawsuit filed in a New York district court on Tuesday, Jordan Kafenbaum claimed she was fired on April 27 - four weeks into her maternity leave - after the company said it was getting rid of her position due to the financial impact of the coronavirus pandemic

She also claims she had been promised a promotion last year, before she revealed she was expecting a child.

The new role was later appointed to a male executive, whom she was initially told would report to her, earlier this month, according to the court documents.

'Importantly, SoulCycle made such plans for Ms Kafenbaum before it knew that Ms Kafenbaum was pregnant. Everything changed once that happened,' the lawsuit states.

According to the complaint, Kafenbaum had told senior Soul Cycle executives, including Gemperle, that she was pregnant in September 2019.

She claims Gemperle later shared the news in a 'backhanded' announcement at a company conference in Miami where more than 100 employees were in attendance.

During a presentation about the newly implemented paternal leave policy at SoulCycle, Gemperle allegedly told staff: 'Jordan Kafenbaum's mother actually just called to thank me for changing our policy because when we did Jordan finally got pregnant!'

The lawsuit claims Kafenbaum was 'embarrassed and shocked that details of her personal life were revealed in such a disparaging manner'.

'[A]s if she calculated the timing of her pregnancy only after knowing that she would be entitled to 12 weeks of paid leave', the documents state.

Kafenbaum later confronted Gemperle, who allegedly told her she had only repeated a 'joke' that she heard from another employee.

Following their conversation, the lawsuit claims, Kafenbaum immediately 'noticed a tangible shift in the way that Gemperle treated her.'

From that point on, Kafenbaum says she was allegedly excluded from decisions within her role, before eventually being told in February that they 'wanted to find a different place' for her.

Kafenbaum claims company executives suggested a 'better fit' for her was in a role to sell corporate bookings.

'Notwithstanding that these roles had no relation to her role as SDTM and were unquestionably lower, less important positions [the company] offered no rational justifications for what clearly was an intended demotion in status,' the lawsuit states.

Kafenbaum gave birth to her child on March 25, and by April 27, she was told she was being let go.

'Among the inconsistent excuses offered by SoulCycle were: (i) department re-organization, (ii) performance concerns, (iii) position elimination, and, finally, (iv) a horrific, global pandemic,' the complaint states.

In her lawsuit, Kafenbaum also accuses the company of following a pattern of firing female employees after they become pregnant.

In a statement to Business Insider, a SoulCycle spokesperson said: 'SoulCycle offers paid parental leave for all full-time employees.'

'Ms. Kafenbaum was unfortunately laid off as part of a necessary restructuring due to the impact of COVID-19. She was paid for the entirety of her maternity leave and offered severance.'

DailyMail.com has contacted SoulCycle for comment.