

# Former TMZ employee sues site over sexism allegations

 [pagesix.com/2020/08/25/former-tmz-employee-bernadette-zilio-sues-site-over-sexism-allegations](https://pagesix.com/2020/08/25/former-tmz-employee-bernadette-zilio-sues-site-over-sexism-allegations)

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A former employee of TMZ and its sister site TooFab is accusing the news outlets of firing her after she complained of sexism.

Bernadette Zilio, who worked for the websites between 2015 and 2020, described the work environment as “100% a bro fest” and a “[f]reaking frat house,” in papers she filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Los Angeles on Tuesday.

Zilio said she and her female colleagues were “belittled and abused, held to different and more stringent standards ... denied advancement opportunities, and retaliated against when [they] resisted the sexist and misogynistic ways.”

Zilio claims that she was fired in February after lodging a complaint with the site’s human resources department, which promised to investigate.

The complaint says she was let go “within a few days of [parent companies] Warner Bros. and EHM’s Human Resources ... telling Ms. Zilio that it rejected her complaints about the sexist and misogynist treatment, and instead accepted the excuses her male supervisors gave for the differential treatment.”

Zilio’s attorneys at Wigdor LLP David E. Gottlieb and Bryan L. Arbeit told Page Six that “Ms. Zilio’s experience demonstrates the exact opposite approach at Warner Bros. and EHM Productions, where Ms. Zilio was shunned after she first complained, fired after she complained a second time, and then threatened if she dared to speak publicly about her experiences.”

A rep for TMZ and TooFab claimed that Zilio was fired for cause.

“This is a blatant attempt to use negative publicity and inaccurate claims to force TooFab and TMZ to pay a monetary settlement,” the spokesperson said. “We will vigorously defend against any attempt to mischaracterize what is a legal and justified employment decision.”