

Amazon Manager Sues Company For Racial Discrimination In Hiring; Cites Abuse, Sexual Harassment

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An Amazon manager Charlotte Newman has sued the giant company for racial discrimination in hiring and accused several executives of abusive behavior and sexual harassment.

In the expansive lawsuit filed Monday in District Court in Washington, D.C. (read it [here](#)), Newman, a former aide to Sen. Cory Booker, alleges the company hired her for a position that wasn't commensurate with her experience in order to pay her less, a practice called "de-leveling" that she claims is common for Black managers. She performed work above her grade, she says, and was passed over for promotions that were given to less qualified white male candidates. She claims the treatment made her appear vulnerable and a target of harassment by other executives.

Newman has been with Amazon for four years and is currently Head of Underrepresented Founder Startup Business Development at Amazon Web Services. She was previously Head of Financial Services Public Policy, Americas at AWS. She is seeking monetary and punitive damages in a suit that names as defendants Amazon.com, Amazon Web Services and three individuals, one of whom no longer works at the company following Newman's internal complaints of harassment and assault.

In a statement Monday, Amazon said it "works hard to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture, and these allegations do not reflect those efforts or our values. We do not tolerate discrimination or harassment of any kind and thoroughly investigate all claims and take appropriate action. We are currently investigating the new allegations included in this lawsuit."

Newman is represented by Douglas Wigdor, who represented six of the women who accused Harvey Weinstein of sexual abuse.

The suit attempts to paint a broad picture of racial discrimination and insensitivity at Amazon. That includes its alleged attempts to quash unionization by warehouse workers who are predominantly black and a lack of diversity at the management and board level that bely a verbal commitments to social justice, including by founder Jeff Bezos and incoming CEO Andy Jassy.

In December, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ordered Amazon to go forward with its first unionization vote in six years, currently underway at a warehouse facility in Bessemer, Alabama. The NLRB also found in December that Amazon had unlawfully terminated a Staten Island warehouse employee after he participated in protests of unsafe conditions and organizing efforts last spring.

Earlier this month, Amazon sued New York Attorney General Letitia James in an attempt to block her from bringing charges against the company over safety concerns at two of its warehouses in New York City.