

# Ex-aide sues NY AG Letitia James over alleged sexual harassment cover-up

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A former aide sued New York Attorney General Letitia James Thursday for allegedly covering up sexual harassment and assault by her ex-chief of staff Ibrahim Khan — who “stuck his tongue down” the victim’s throat, new court papers show.

Sofia Quintanar, 33, alleges that Khan — who resigned after being slapped with multiple sexual harassment complaints — forcefully shoved his tongue down her throat at a political fundraiser in Brooklyn on Nov. 17, 2021, according to her Manhattan Supreme Court lawsuit.

She accuses the AG’s office of covering up the allegations against Khan — James’ chief of staff for 10 years — and of making “misleading statements to the press” that “he was on vacation or with a sick relative” when he was actually suspended for two months pending an investigation into the claims.

The complaints were filed before Election Day and kept quiet as James cruised to victory, sources previously told The Post.

Following the probe, the AG's office concluded on Dec. 2 that Khan had engaged in sexual harassment and misconduct involving two former staffers.

Still, Khan was allowed to resign on Nov. 22, ahead of the conclusion of the investigation, with pay through until the end of the year and without any statements about the accusations.



Sofia Quintanar sued New York Attorney General Letitia James Thursday for allegedly covering up sexual harassment and assault.  
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Quintanar only learned “from press reports that Attorney General James permitted Khan to resign without formally revealing the reasons for his departure,” the suit charges.

She is suing the AG, James' campaign and Khan for unspecified damages. The claims against James, her office and her campaign include negligence, discrimination and retaliation.

Quintanar alleges that James and the office should have protected her and that they were negligent in hiring and supervising Khan, according to the suit.

The lawsuit states that James in 2019 also allowed a press office deputy to quietly resign "under similar circumstances."

Quintanar was hired as a deputy press secretary for the AG's office in 2020 and left to work for Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown as he was running for re-election in July 2021.

But once Brown was successfully re-elected, Quintanar was on the hunt for a new job prompting her to attend the fundraiser where the alleged assault happened.



Quintanar alleges that James and the office should have protected her and that they were negligent in hiring and supervising Ibrahim Khan.

Paul Martinka for NY Post

When Quintanar first saw Khan things were friendly and he bought her and a pal drinks, the suit claims. But then Khan coaxed Quintanar outside under the pretense that it was too loud inside the venue, the court papers claim.

Once outside, Khan “rested the weight of his hand on Quintanar’s shoulder, and shoved his face forward aggressively to kiss her, without saying a word,” the suit alleges.

“He then stuck his tongue down her throat, still holding her shoulder.”

A “stunned” Quintanar pushed him away and asked “Aren’t you married?” “Don’t you have kids?” and “What are you doing?” the suit alleges.

She stepped back when Khan tried to kiss her again, the lawsuit states.

Quintanar found her friend inside and the pair tried to dodge Khan as he “continued to follow them” until she finally left the event, the papers claim.

Quintanar says she didn’t come forward with what happened to her until this fall because she was afraid of harming her career in light of “Khan’s high profile and his power within New York Democratic politics,” the suit claims.

But over time she came to find out that another former staffer had accused him of sexual assault in 2017, the court papers allege.

In October, Quintanar told an investigator in the AG’s office about her claims and anxiously awaited the results of the probe throughout the fall only to discover that the AG’s office allowed him to resign and release a public statement “in which he took a victory lap for his time working” for the AG, the suit claims.



Ibrahim Khan is accused of kissing a former aide without her consent.  
New York State Attorney General

Quintanar said in a statement she hopes coming forward will help women of color have a voice in the #MeToo movement.

“While I fear the effect that this might have on my career, I know that fear should never stand in the way of doing what is right,” Quintanar’s statement reads. “I hope I can give other survivors the courage to find their voice and hold those in positions of power responsible for their actions when they demonstrate the belief that they are above the law.”

Her lawyers Douglas Wigdor and Valdi Licul said: “This case is not about politics. It is about abuse of power, the absence of appropriate oversight, and the vindication of the rights of Ms. Quintanar.

“We will leave no stone unturned in our quest for justice and accountability.”

An AG spokesperson said: “We took the allegations brought to our office seriously and engaged in decisive, prompt, and appropriate action.”

Khan didn’t immediately return a request for comment Thursday.