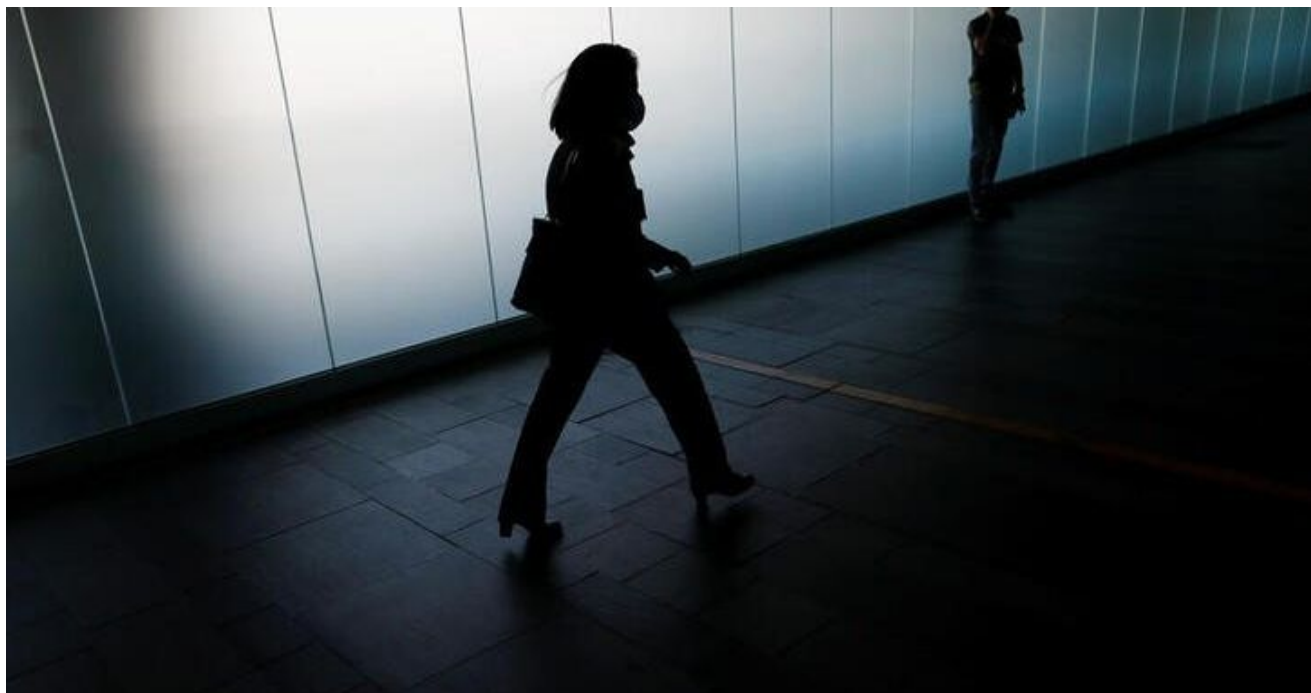


N.Y. lawyer sued for 'quiet quitting' strikes back with race bias lawsuit

[reuters.com/legal/litigation/ny-lawyer-sued-quiet-quitting-strikes-back-with-race-bias-lawsuit-2023-02-27/](https://www.reuters.com/legal/litigation/ny-lawyer-sued-quiet-quitting-strikes-back-with-race-bias-lawsuit-2023-02-27/)

By David Thomas



A woman is seen in silhouette as she walks at Fiumicino Airport, as Italy eases movement between regions, while the country unwinds its rigid lockdown due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak, in Rome, Italy June 3, 2020. REUTERS/Yara Nardi

- Companies
- Law firms

Napoli Shkolnik PLLC

(Reuters) - A former lawyer at New York law firm Napoli Shkolnik sued the firm on Monday for racial discrimination and said it had filed a lawsuit falsely accusing her of "quiet quitting" in retaliation for her asserting bias claims.

Heather Palmore, who is Black, said in her [Manhattan federal lawsuit](#) that her former employers at Napoli Shkolnik were "boorish bullies" who treated minority employees as second-class citizens.

She filed the case just three days after Napoli Shkolnik sued her in Nassau County for allegedly failing to deliver promised business to the firm after it hired her in October 2021.

The firm's lawsuit said Palmore secretly promoted her own solo law firm on social media while she was supposed to be working for Napoli Shkolnik. The firm alleged Palmore "took advantage of the new remote work environment to 'quiet quit' her job."

Palmore's complaint on Monday said the firm began retaliating against her after she complained of racial discrimination, culminating in its lawsuit against her on Friday. Palmore said the firm fired her on Sunday.

As part of the alleged discrimination, Palmore claimed that in December 2021 someone at Napoli Shkolnik hung a stuffed panda bear from a noose tied to a light fixture in view of her office, evoking racial violence. Palmore said the firm did not follow up about the incident.

Palmore said in her lawsuit that her solo firm does not exist anymore. She also said a white male lawyer at Napoli Shkolnik openly displays his own firm without penalty.

Lucas Markowitz, a lawyer at Offit Kurman representing the Napoli Shkolnik firm, said in a statement Palmore's lawsuit was a "shakedown."

The panda that hung outside her office was a client's mascot, known as "Anda the Panda," Markowitz said, adding that Palmore did not complain about the panda until it became apparent she was going to be fired.

Palmore's lawsuit asserts claims of discrimination, retaliation and violations of both the Family and Medical Leave Act and New York's anti-SLAPP law against the firm and partners Paul Napoli, Marie Napoli and Hunter Shkolnik.

Napoli Shkolnik's lawsuit against Palmore alleges breach of contract and loyalty, defamation and unjust enrichment. Palmore is seeking an unspecified amount of damages, while the firm wants at least \$400,000 from Palmore.

The federal lawsuit is Palmore v. Napoli Shkolnik, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Manhattan, 1:23-cv-01616. The state lawsuit is Napoli Shkolnik v. Palmore, Nassau County Supreme Court, No. 603189/2023.

For Heather Palmore: David Gottlieb and Kassandra Vazquez of Wigdor

For Napoli Shkolnik: Lucas Markowitz of Offit Kurman

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