

# Ex-DLA Piper IP Lawyer Says Firing While Pregnant Was Over Rates

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## Business & Practice



A DLA Piper sign is seen on September 19, 2020 in Warsaw, Poland.

Aleksander Kalka/NurPhoto via Getty Images

- Anisha Mehta filed charge of discrimination before EEOC
- Firm accused of firing pregnant lawyer over bill pressure

A DLA Piper former intellectual property senior associate alleges the law firm discriminated by firing her six days after she submitted a maternity leave request.

Anisha Mehta earned three pay raises and no negative feedback in the year leading up to an October termination prompted by “purported poor performance,” she said in a complaint filed Tuesday with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in New York.

The true motive was pressure from clients over firm billing rates, “in addition to the fact that less billable work was coming through the firm’s door,” according to Mehta, who worked in the New York office.

The firing came six days after she formally requested maternity leave, which she expected to start three months later, according to the complaint. She anticipated 18 to 20 weeks of leave with compensation between \$173,000 and \$192,000.

DLA Piper, among the largest firms in the world, has a “generous leave policy and a great track record of supporting working parents,” said Michele Maryott, a Gibson Dunn & Crutcher partner representing DLA Piper. “The firm looks forward to having the EEOC charge reviewed in the normal course.”

DLA Piper in 2021 recruited Mehta from K&L Gates, where she had managed trademark portfolios and counseled companies including Amazon.com Inc.

Her complaint targets the firm and Gina Durham, the deputy practice group leader of the IP and technology group whom she reported to.

Mehta has not joined another employer since her termination.

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