

THE
NATIONAL LAW REVIEW

International Staffing Company to Pay \$50,000 to Settle EEOC Sexual Harassment Lawsuit

Monday, June 17, 2019

Male Manager's Sexual Harassment and Company's Failure to Protect Victim Forced Her to Quit, Federal Agency Charged

KANSAS CITY- Chicago-based Staff Management | SMX (SMX), which provides temporary employees to the light-industrial sector worldwide, has agreed to pay a female former employee \$50,000 and furnish other relief to settle a sexual harassment lawsuit filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency announced today.

The EEOC filed suit against the company in February 2018, charging SMX violated federal law when a male manager at an SMX worksite in Kansas City, Kan., made explicit sexual comments to female employees and demanded sexual favors from them. Although one victim complained, the harassment continued, including the male manager exposing himself to her, according to the suit. After the victim again complained about the harassment, SMX investigated but allowed the manager to return to work. When the manager threatened the woman and demanded to know why she reported his misconduct, the distressed and dejected employee quit.

Such alleged conduct violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, and forbids retaliation against employees who complain about sexual harassment. The EEOC filed its lawsuit (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission v. SMX, LLC d/b/a Staff Management | SMX, Civil Action No. 2:18-cv-2058) in U.S. District Court for the District of Kansas after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process.

In addition to the monetary relief, the three-year consent decree settling the suit, signed by Judge Holly L. Teeter, enjoins SMX from violating Title VII in the future. It also orders that SMX train its temporary employees at worksites in Kansas and Missouri on identifying and reporting sexual harassment and increase sexual harassment training for its investigators who handle sexual harassment complaints for the company. The company will also provide regular reports to the EEOC regarding sexual harassment complaints and how it handles those complaints.

"Employers need to understand that anti-harassment policies and procedures, however good in theory, must be vigorously applied and enforced to protect all employees," said L. Jack Vasquez, Jr., director of the EEOC's St. Louis District Office. "Unambiguous, comprehensive and frequent harassment training is crucial to prevent harassment and retaliation."

Andrea G. Baran, the EEOC's regional attorney in St. Louis, added, "Temporary staffing employees can be particularly vulnerable to harassment or other coercion. This settlement both compensates the alleged victim in this case and will help protect others from sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination."



Article By

[U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#)

[U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#)

[Labor & Employment](#)

[All Federal](#)

The EEOC advances opportunity in the workplace by enforcing federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. More information is available at www.eeoc.gov. Stay connected with the latest EEOC news by subscribing to our [email updates](#).

Source: <https://www1.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/6-17-19.cfm>

© Copyright U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Source URL: <https://www.natlawreview.com/article/international-staffing-company-to-pay-50000-to-settle-eeoc-sexual-harassment-lawsuit>