Chipotle Mexican Grill Sued by EEOC For Sexual Harassment, Retaliation

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Female GM Propositioned and Groped Young Male Employee, Federal Agency Charges

SAN JOSE, Calif. - Fast-food chain Chipotle Mexican Grill violated federal law by allowing a restaurant manager to sexually harass her subordinate and retaliating against him after he reported the misconduct, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) charged in a lawsuit filed today.

According to the EEOC's investigation, a 22-year-old male shift manager at a Chipotle San Jose store was forced to endure intrusive verbal and physical harassment by his female general manager. In addition to frequently discussing her own sex life and posting a daily "sex scoreboard" in the main office concerning all the staff's sex lives, the general manager told the young shift manager that she wanted to suck his genitals, watch him have sex with his girlfriend, and engage in a "threesome." She also frequently slapped, groped and grabbed his privates, the EEOC charged.

Even after he reported her behavior to upper management, the general manager continued to harass him, says the EEOC, and she retaliated against him by instructing employees not to speak to him. Also, he was locked in a walk-in freezer, and his motorcycle was picked up and moved to a different area in the parking lot. Left with no other alternatives, the male employee ultimately quit, the EEOC said.

Sexual harassment and retaliation for complaining about it violate Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. After first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process, the EEOC filed its lawsuit (EEOC v. Chipotle Mexican Grill, Case No. 5:17-CV-05382) in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. The EEOC seeks monetary damages for the shift manager and injunctive relief to remedy and prevent sexual harassment and retaliation from recurring at Chipotle.

"This young man's first real job experience was shaped by a supervisor who abused her authority and created a sexually charged workplace culture," said EEOC San Francisco Senior Trial Attorney Peter F. Laura. "Federal law requires employers to protect their workers from harassment and sexual abuse, especially in the hands of a manager."

EEOC San Jose Local Office Director Rosa Salazar added, "Employers must take immediate and effective steps to investigate harassment, no matter whether filed by a male or female employee." She noted that 16.6% of sexual harassment charges filed with the agency were brought by male workers in FY 2016.

The EEOC's Report on the Study of Harassment in the Workplace notes that workforces with a significant number of teenage and young adult employees may have a greater risk of harassment and discusses strategies to reduce harassment.
Read the article on the EEOC website [here](https://www.natlawreview.com/article/chipotle-mexican-grill-sued-eeoc-sexual-harassment-retaliation).

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