

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Employees point finger at The Plaza for sexual harassment

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The Plaza Hotel is managed by Fairmont Hotels & Resorts. Image credit: The Plaza

By STAFF REPORTS

Fairmont Hotels & Resorts' The Plaza is facing a lawsuit from current and former employees who say they were victims of sexual harassment and assault by fellow employees, including managers.

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The plaintiffs, who seek monetary damages from Fairmont, its parent AccorHotels and the hotel's owner the Sahara Group, claim that female employees have been subjected to "rape culture," as they have been the targets of unwanted groping, kissing and sexual remarks. The suit alleges that management knew about the harassment and neglected to take actions to protect its staff from the verbal and physical abuse.

Seeking damages

In addition to claiming that The Plaza's management has not properly punished or prevented offenders, the suit says that those who came forward after being harassed faced retaliation. The suit claims that as a result of The Plaza's "malicious" behavior, the plaintiffs' professional reputations suffered, causing damage both economic and non monetary.

Four of the plaintiffs are current employees of The Plaza, while two are former employees. The women were hired for roles including hospitality coordinator, cocktail server and bartender.

Within the 50-page filing with a New York court are examples from the women's own experiences.

One of the plaintiffs says the general manager of the hotel cornered her in a coat check closet, grabbed her and forcibly kissed her. Also included in the suit are allegations of catcalling, unwanted touching and sexual comments.



The Palm Court at The Plaza. Image credit: The Plaza

The suit claims that despite complaints and a number of managers witnessing harassment, no steps were taken to punish the offenders. In addition, one of the women says she was pressured by her union to refrain from complaining.

According to a report in the [New York Post](#), after one of the women complained, the hotel management told other female workers to dress more conservatively.

"At Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, the safety and welfare of our guests and staff is always our highest priority," said the hotel group said in a statement about the case. "Any attempt at harassment or discrimination toward our colleagues and guests has not and never will be tolerated.

"We are proud of our differences, actively prioritizing gender equality, diversity and inclusion. We take all claims of harassment or discrimination seriously, take appropriate remedial action where warranted, and do not retaliate against any staff member who raises a claim of harassment or discrimination in good faith."

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