

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

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GLC RESTAURANTS TO PAY \$550,000 FOR SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF TEEN WORKERS BY MALE BOSS

EEOC Settles Suit for Young Women Subjected to Lewd Behavior by Repeat Offender

PHOENIX – The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) today announced the settlement of a discrimination lawsuit against GLC Restaurants, Inc. (GLC) for \$550,000 and substantial remedial relief on behalf of a class of teenage workers who were sexually harassed by a middle-aged male supervisor, including unwanted touching and lewd comments. Flagstaff based GLC is a franchisee doing business as McDonald's Restaurants in Arizona and California.

The EEOC maintained in the suit that the male supervisor in question was a repeat offender who subjected eight young women, who were part-time crew members, to a sexually hostile workplace at the McDonald's run by GLC in Cordes Junction, Ariz. Previously, the same male manager allegedly harassed teen female employees at a GLC-owned McDonald's Restaurant in Camp Verde, Ariz. The EEOC said that GLC knew of this manager's earlier conduct but failed to take appropriate action to prevent him from repeating the unlawful behavior at another of its restaurants. The EEOC also alleged that the working conditions for one teenager in Cordes Junction were so intolerable that she was forced to resign.

"This was the first job experience for many of these young women, some of whom were only 14-years old at the time," said EEOC Trial Attorney Michelle Marshall. "No one should have to endure sexual harassment to earn a paycheck. Employers must be extra vigilant in protecting teen workers, who are one of the most vulnerable segments of the labor force."

In addition to paying \$550,000 to the eight young women, the EEOC settlement by consent decree requires GLC to provide training and other relief aimed at educating its employees about sexual harassment and their rights under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Under additional terms of the settlement, Prescott attorney Milton W. Hathaway, Jr, the private lawyer for four of the young women, will apply to the court for an award of attorney fees up to \$400,000.00.

EEOC Regional Attorney Mary Jo O'Neill, who oversaw the case, said, "Employers have a responsibility to take appropriate corrective and preventive action the first time they learn of discriminatory conduct in their workplace. We encourage employers to take adequate steps to protect the rights of all employees. Promoting a positive workplace for teens by stopping harassment before it starts is in

everyone's best interest."

In addition to the monetary relief for the young women, the GLC also agreed to an injunction prohibiting the company from discriminating based on sex. In order to prevent discrimination in the future, the company will provide sexual harassment training to employees; review and revise its policy and procedures for reporting harassment; take complaints about unlawful conduct seriously; investigate complaints promptly; and ensure that there will be no retaliation against employees who complain. The EEOC filed the suit in U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona after investigating multiple charges of discrimination and exhausting its efforts to reach a voluntary settlement (*EEOC v. GLC Restaurants, Inc.*, d/b/a McDonald's Restaurant, Civil Action No. CIV- 05-0618-PCT-DGC).

Amanda Henry, currently a junior at Northern Arizona University, one of the victims said, "Teenagers who are employed need to know that they should report any inappropriate behavior to their employers, to their parents, and the EEOC, if necessary. I am happy that our complaints and our actions against GLC for the last four and a half years will finally lead to changes which should keep something like this from happening again in the future."

In September 2004, EEOC Chair Naomi C. Earp (then vice chair) launched the federal agency's national Youth@Work Initiative -- a comprehensive outreach and education campaign designed to inform teens about their employment rights and responsibilities and to help employers create positive first work experiences for young adults. The EEOC has held more than 2,100 Youth@Work events nationwide since the program was launched, reaching more than 141,000 students, education professionals, and employers. Further information about the Youth@Work campaign, including how to schedule a free Youth@Work outreach presentation, is available on the agency's web site at <http://www.eeoc.gov/initiatives/youth/index.html>. Specific EEOC-related information for teens is available on the Youth@Work web site at <http://www.youth.eeoc.gov>.

The EEOC enforces federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. Further information about the EEOC is available on its web site at www.eeoc.gov.

This page was last modified on March 22, 2007.



[Return to Home Page](#)