

# Now more than ever, rein in sex harassment

The #MeToo social media movement designed to build awareness of sexual harassment in the workplace began just six months ago. To say it worked is an understatement.

Beyond its celebrity origins, #MeToo spawned the multimillion-dollar #TimesUp fund that pays lawyers to help working-class women press sexual harassment claims in court.

For employers, that means you can't afford to ignore a single sexual harassment complaint. It's now far more treacherous than ever before.

Consider, for example, this recent EEOC sexual harassment settlement that cost an employer almost quarter million dollars—and then some!

**Recent settlement:** A production manager at Candid Litho Printing's plant and graphic arts facility in Las Vegas complained that her supervisor was sexually harassing her.

According to the lawsuit the EEOC filed on her behalf, she was promptly fired. But she wasn't the only victim. Shortly afterward, both her son and her fiancé also lost their jobs at Candid Litho.

When it became clear the EEOC was serious about pursuing the lawsuit, the company agreed to settle. The total settlement payout: \$242,799.

But that payment only covered part of the settlement terms. In addition, Candid Litho will face EEOC supervision for three years.

It will have to tell the EEOC about all sex discrimination and harassment complaints it receives, and it will have to file a report whenever it hires a new employee or terminates anyone.

It also has to hire an anti-harassment consultant to review and revise company policies to ensure they prohibit sex discrimination, sexual harassment and retaliation. The consultant will also design a process for promptly handling harassment complaints. The company has to train all employees about the new rules.

**Final note:** Anna Park, the EEOC attorney who handled the case, said, "As the #MeToo movement has demonstrated, female employees continue to face sex discrimination and harassment in the workplace."

She went on to warn employers that having policies in place isn't enough. Employers also must hold supervisors accountable and follow through on all complaints.