

Sexual Harassment: Jury Awards Damages To Housekeeper Who Complained.

A nursing home housekeeper repeatedly complained to her supervisors that she was being sexually harassed by certain residents when she went to clean their rooms.

She finally walked off the job in frustration after a series of heated discussions with facility management failed to bring about a solution that was satisfactory to her. When she phoned in to ask about her employment status with the facility she was told it was best they part company.

After she filed a complaint with the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission she was rehired, with assurances that the harassment would be dealt with, and she continues to work at the facility.

An employer has the responsibility to combat sexual harassment on the job whether it comes from supervisors, coworkers or the employer's clients and customers.

An employer cannot retaliate against an employee who complains about sexual harassment from clients or customers.

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
SEVENTH CIRCUIT
June 25, 2010

The US Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit approved a judgment of \$15,000 against the facility for the income she lost in the interim, plus \$50,000 punitive damages.

The jury determined she had the right to walk off the job in frustration over her complaints not being taken seriously. She was not fired for unexcused absence. ***Pickett v. Sheridan Health***, __ F. 3d __, 2010 WL 2541186 (7th Cir., June 25, 2010).