

FROM THE COURTS

Female Associate Says NJ Law Firm Is a 'Boys Club'



ADOBE STOCK

Regina Rodriguez claims the real reason she was let go from Brach Eichler was her gender and race.

by Charles Toutant

A lawsuit claims New Jersey law firm Brach Eichler is a “boys’ club” that falsely attributed its firing of a Hispanic woman attorney to a downturn in business.

When Regina Rodriguez was let go in January, she was told the firm didn’t have enough work, but the true reason was her gender and race, the suit claims.

At the time, Rodriguez was the only female attorney and the only attorney of color reporting to Edward Capozzi, head of the personal injury department, her suit states. Her departure left behind five other associates, all white males, in the personal injury department, and a sixth white male was hired soon thereafter, the suit says.

According to the National Law Journal’s 2022 NLJ 500 ranking of firms based on size, Brach Eichler has 74 attorneys and is ranked 490th in the United States.

Rodriguez claims that she was assigned lower-level cases and tasks, while the white male attorneys in her department were given larger, more lucrative cases and tasks. She says she was not given the chance to try cases and develop trial skills.

She also alleges the firm sent all the male attorneys in the department to a weeklong seminar in California with a trial consultant, but she was the only attorney in the department not invited.

And male attorneys in the personal injury department frequently went to strip clubs together, Rodriguez’s suit claims.

Her suit also says that Capozzi regularly referred to women as “whores” and “bitches” and called certain female paralegals in the office “hog beast” and “pig monster.”

Rodriguez filed her suit in U.S. District Court in Newark on Aug. 19. Her attorney is Daniel Orlow of Console Mattiacci Law in Moorestown.

Brach Eichler’s general counsel, Charles Gormally, and John Fanburg,

the firm’s chief executive officer, said in a statement, “The allegations in the complaint are untrue. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission investigated the matter completely and dismissed the charge of discrimination against the firm. Brach Eichler remains committed to fostering a diverse, inclusive and equitable workplace for all of our employees.”

But according to court papers, the EEOC said it “will not proceed further with the investigation,” made no determination about whether further investigation would establish violations of the law, and its decision “should not be construed as a finding of no merit in the suit.”

Rodriguez, who joined the firm in 2018, says in court papers that she was excluded from meetings and communications related to her job duties. She said she won a contest for settling the most personal injury settlements, but the monetary award she got was less than the amount that had been advertised for the winner, the suit claims.

“The discriminatory conduct of defendant, as alleged herein, was severe and/or pervasive enough to make a reasonable person believe that the conditions of employment had been altered and that a hostile work environment existed, and made plaintiff believe that the conditions of her employment had been altered and that a hostile work environment existed on account of her sex and/or race,” the suit says.

Rodriguez says she was required to take calls from the office on holidays, weekends and on vacation, but her white male colleagues were not. In addition, white male attorneys were paid for each new client lead, but she was not, the suit claims.

Orlow, Rodriguez’s attorney, did not respond to a request for comment about the case.

Charles Toutant is a litigation writer for the New Jersey Law Journal, an ALM affiliate of the Daily Business Review. Contact him at ctoutant@alm.com.



CITY OF DORAL NOTICE OF ZONING WORKSHOP

All residents, property owners and other interested parties are hereby notified of a **Zoning Workshop** on **Thursday, September 8, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.** The Meeting will take place at the City of Doral, Government Center, Council Chambers located at 8401 NW 53rd Terrace, Doral, Florida, 33166.

The following application will be presented:

HEARING NO.: 22-09-DOR-02

APPLICANT: EWE Warehouse Investments XXXII, LTD (the “Applicant”) c/o James R. Williams Jr., Esq.

PROJECT NAME: Legacy at Doral

PROPERTY OWNER: EWE Warehouse Investments XXXII, LTD

LOCATION: 2525 NW 82 Avenue, Doral, Florida 33122

FOLIO NUMBER: 35-3027-024-0010

SIZE OF PROPERTY: ±9.26 acres

FUTURE LAND USE MAP DESIGNATION: Doral Décor District

ZONING DESIGNATION: Industrial District (I) and Doral Décor Overlay District (DDOD)

REQUEST: The Applicant proposes to develop a six (6) story residential building with a parking garage, which will also include amenity space, on the west portion of the Property consisting of 185 dwelling units.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Tract “A” of “NORTON TIRE COMPANY”, according to the Plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 127, at Page 90, of the Public Records of Dade County, Florida

LESS:

The Westerly 2.00 feet thereof;

AND LESS:

The external area of a circular curve lying within said Tract “A”, being concave to the Northeast, having a radius of 25 feet and tangent to a line 2.00 feet East of and parallel to the West Line of said Tract “A”, and tangent to the South Line of said Tract “A”.

Location Map



ZONING WORKSHOP PROCESS: The zoning workshop consists of two sessions:

1. **First Session.** The first session of a zoning workshop shall provide a forum for members of the public to learn about proposed developments within the city. Developments may be presented to the public simultaneously, in several locations within the meeting site. During this session, members of the public are encouraged to ask questions and to provide feedback to the applicant about the proposed development. The applicant shall provide visual depictions, such as renderings, drawings, pictures, and the location of the proposed development. In addition, representatives of the applicant shall be available to answer questions that members of the public may have about the proposed development. The members of the City Council shall not be present during the first session of the zoning workshop.

2. **Second Session.** The second session of a zoning workshop shall provide a forum for the City Council to learn about the proposed developments discussed at the first session of the zoning workshop. No quorum requirement shall apply. Developments shall be presented by the applicants sequentially, one at a time, for the City Council’s review and comment. The applicant shall again present visual depictions of the proposed development. In addition, the applicant shall be available to answer any questions that members of the City Council may have about the proposed development.

No quorum requirement shall apply nor will any vote on any project be taken, but roll call will be taken, as it is a publicly noticed meeting.

Information relating to this request is on file and may be examined in the City of Doral, Planning and Zoning Department located at **8401 NW 53rd Terrace, Doral, FL 33166**. Maps and other data pertaining to these applications are available for public inspection during normal business hours in City Hall. Inquiries regarding the item may be directed to the Planning and Zoning Department at 305-59-DORAL.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, all persons who are disabled and who need special accommodations to participate in this meeting because of that disability should contact the Planning and Zoning Department at 305-59-DORAL no later than three (3) business days prior to the proceeding.

NOTE: If you are not able to communicate, or are not comfortable expressing yourself, in the English language, it is your responsibility to bring with you an English-speaking interpreter when conducting business at the City of Doral during the zoning application process up to, and including, appearance at a hearing. This person may be a friend, relative or someone else. A minor cannot serve as a valid interpreter. The City of Doral DOES NOT provide translation services during the zoning application process or during any quasi-judicial proceeding.

NOTA: Si usted no está en capacidad de comunicarse, o no se siente cómodo al expresarse en inglés, es de su responsabilidad traer un intérprete del idioma inglés cuando trate asuntos públicos o de negocios con la Ciudad de Doral durante el proceso de solicitudes de zonificación, incluyendo su comparecencia a una audiencia. Esta persona puede ser un amigo, familiar o alguien que le haga la traducción durante su comparecencia a la audiencia. Un menor de edad no puede ser intérprete. La Ciudad de Doral NO suministra servicio de traducción durante ningún procedimiento o durante el proceso de solicitudes de zonificación.

Connie Diaz, MMC
City Clerk
City of Doral

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