

Wigdor Files Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Suit Against One Equity Partners

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On May 29th, 2024, Wigdor LLP filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of its client, Dianna Toomey, alleging discrimination, harassment and retaliation against One Equity Partners (“OEP”), a private equity firm with over \$10 billion in assets under management. As alleged in [the Complaint](#), throughout her employment as an Executive Assistant at OEP, Ms. Toomey experienced a litany of misogynistic and racist conduct perpetrated by the firm’s top executives, among others. By way of example only, the Complaint alleges the following:

- OEP founder and Chairman (and former President), Dick Cashin, frequently espoused his belief that men are superior to women, stating that he preferred not to hire women for intellectually demanding jobs and that OEP should only hire women (particularly mothers) for “unintellectual jobs” like the one held by Toomey.
- Cashin – in front of the entire Company – openly espoused the belief that women are intellectually inferior, saying that “women cannot do better than men in real schools, like Harvard.”
- Cashin regularly approached Toomey’s desk and asked, “Dianna, don’t we prefer skinny EAs over fat EAs?”
- OEP President Greg Belinfanti made repeated comments such as, “I would never meet alone with women” and “I would never meet 1-1 with a woman with a closed door. That is just an invitation to a lawsuit.”
- Belinfanti also would only allow women to enter a short distance into his office. Of course, this type of behavior serves to limit female employees’ opportunities for involvement and advancement at the firm.
- Belinfanti would not ride with women in cars alone – on one occasion he left an OEP AE in tears after he kicked her out of a ride service that had been paid for by the Firm because he would not be in a car with a woman.
- Maureen O’Connell, a colleague, also referred to Jewish people as cheap, and even called Partner David Lippin (“Lippin”) a “Cheap Jew.”
- O’Connell referred to Belinfanti as a “cheap Jamaican.”
- O’Connell stated that another Black employee faked a family member’s illness “to go on an extended vacation because that’s what her people [i.e., people of color] do.”

Ms. Toomey is an Arab-American of Lebanese descent. In addition to the above, the Complaint alleges that Ms. Toomey was berated and called a “stupid Arab” and a “terrorist.” She was subjected to comments about Lebanese people being “disgusting” and descriptions of Arab-Americans as “cheap” and “disgusting,” as alleged. Toomey was also subjected to sexist treatment. A senior employee subjected her to unwanted touching, and she was called a “bitch” with astonishing regularity, according to the Complaint. She also claims to have received frequent negative comments regarding her appearance in the workplace.

On March 25, 2024, Ms. Toomey reached out to Dora Stojka, OEP’s Chief Operating Officer, and complained about much of the treatment described in the Complaint. Three weeks later, Ms. Toomey – who had just received a raise, a bonus and lavish praise from her supervisors – was summarily terminated without notice. Ms. Toomey’s termination was obviously retaliatory. Indeed, as alleged, Stojka would later admit that Ms. Toomey “would have had a long career with [OEP] if [she] would have just kept [her] head down and [her] mouth quiet and didn’t stir up trouble.”

The Complaint can be read [here](#).

Statement from Michael Willemin, Partner at Wigdor LLP:

“Whether a firm has \$1 under management or \$10 billion, like One Equity Partners, it is required to adhere to the anti-discrimination, anti-harassment and anti-retaliation laws. OEP failed miserably in this regard, and we look forward to holding it and its executives accountable for their conduct.”