

Media

# U.S. agency sues New York Times, accusing it of bias against White male employee

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission alleged that the newspaper violated civil rights law by denying a promotion to a White man and blamed its adherence to DEI policies.

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The New York Times building in Manhattan. (Kylie Cooper/Reuters)



By [Scott Nover](#)

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission sued the New York Times on Tuesday, alleging that the news organization violated federal law by passing over a White male employee for a promotion.

“No one is above the law — including ‘elite’ institutions,” EEOC Chair Andrea Lucas, an appointee of President Donald Trump, wrote in a statement. “There is no such thing as ‘reverse discrimination’; all race or

sex discrimination is equally unlawful, according to long-established civil rights principles.”

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She continued: “Federal law is clear: making hiring or promotion decisions motivated in whole or in part by race or sex violates federal law. There is no diversity exception to this rule.”

The lawsuit, filed in federal district court in Lower Manhattan, alleges that the Times violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title I of the Civil Rights Act of 1991 in denying an unnamed employee a promotion. The EEOC said the Times’ emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), which the Trump administration has worked to eliminate, was to blame. [✦ Dive deeper](#)

“The New York Times categorically rejects the meritless and politically motivated allegations that the Trump administration’s EEOC is pursuing against us,” Times spokeswoman Danielle Rhoades Ha wrote in a statement Sunday after the newspaper first reported on the brewing litigation. “... Throughout this process, the EEOC deviated from standard practices in highly unusual ways, blatantly weaponizing a traditionally independent government body to serve a predetermined narrative.”

The White male employee sought a job as deputy real estate editor, according to the lawsuit, and lost to a multiracial female candidate without direct experience covering real estate. [✦ Dive deeper](#)

“Neither race nor gender played a role in this decision,” Rhoades Ha said in a follow-up statement Tuesday. “We hired the most qualified candidate, and she is an excellent editor.”

Kalpana Kotagal, the sole Democrat on the commission, voted against authorizing the lawsuit. While everyone is entitled to employment protections under the law, she said in a post on social media, the mere existence of DEI policies isn't enough to demonstrate misconduct.

She also questioned the motivations behind the lawsuit.

“Regrettably, I fear this litigation is driven not by the merits, but by a desire to advance the administration’s political agenda, which weakens civil rights protections for workers and undermines employer efforts to advance equal employment opportunity,” she said.

The lawsuit follows reporting in the Times alleging that staffers at the EEOC are under intense pressure to bring cases that further the Trump administration’s agenda, including dismantling DEI policies. The Washington Post has not independently verified that reporting.

The lawsuit echoes previous EEOC actions in recent months. In March, Planned Parenthood of Illinois settled an EEOC investigation into discrimination against White employees, agreeing to pay \$500,000 to end the probe. In February, the commission subpoenaed Nike in an investigation over how its DEI practices have affected White workers.

The Times is no stranger to squaring off with Trump in court. Last year, the Times sued the Defense Department over a controversial press policy. A federal judge ruled in favor of the Times, finding the Pentagon’s policy unconstitutional, though the government is appealing. Trump has also sued the Times in his personal capacity, alleging the paper defamed him in its reporting on his business achievements.