

Oak Room Under Investigation by New York Civil Rights Violation Lawyer Following Sexual Harassment Accusations

Oak Room's Eric Hara sued for sexual harassment by a former pastry chef.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK – [Sexual harassment in New York](#) restaurants has been making the news lately. Most recently, former pastry chef filed a lawsuit against Executive Chef Eric Hara and her former workplace, The Oak Room.

“[Sexual harassment in the restaurant industry](#) is a common problem throughout New York. Stressful working conditions, odd working hours and informal work atmosphere can all increase the risk of [sexual harassment in the workplace](#), and the liabilities and damages which result,” said David Perecman, a [New York civil rights lawyer](#) for over 30 years.

According to the *New York Post*, Melissa Rodriguez claimed that she and other staffers were sexually harassed in the workplace by their boss, Hara, on a regular basis. In the lawsuit, Rodriguez said she was subjected to “sexual, physical, and culinary harassment,” by Hara.

In Rodriguez’s own words, Hara “would literally pick me up and throw me in the garbage can -- just because he thought it was funny.”

Hara also allegedly said to her that he hired her only because of her looks and nicknamed her “Whore.” Rodriguez said he would boast “all he had to do was get one drink in [her] and [she] would go to bed with him.

Rodriguez said she endured the [sexual harassment in the workplace](#) because Hara threatened to ruin her career if she quit, and because she wanted to get into the union.

Apparently, Hara harassed the one other female employee in the kitchen, as well. According to the [workplace harassment lawsuit](#), when a male employee boasted of his penis size, Hara ordered a female chef to measure him with a ruler to prove it.

Hara, who has since left the Plaza hotel restaurant to open his own, denied the allegations of [sexual harassment claims](#).

Other New York restaurants at the center of [sexual harassment lawsuits](#) are Gordon Ramsay’s The London, Tenjune, Gabriela’s and Ayhan’s Fish Kebab.

“As evidenced by these [civil rights violation lawsuits](#), sexual harassment claims remain a significant problem for restaurants in New York,” civil rights lawyer Perecman said. “Employees, however, have other options than to stick it out and accept the abuse.”

Federal, New York state laws and New York City laws protect employees by prohibiting workplace harassment and other discriminatory conduct that creates an offensive and [hostile working environment](#).

A [civil rights violation complaint](#) against the Oak Room and Chef Hara was also lodged with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

If a person believes that he or she may be the victim of workplace harassment or another civil rights violation, they should [contact The Perecman Firm](#) so that [experienced New York civil rights violation lawyers](#) may assess the situation and provide legal advice on how to protect civil rights.

About David Perecman and The Perecman Firm, PLLC:

For the past 30 years, the New York sexual harassment, gender discrimination, age discrimination, and civil rights violation lawyers at The Perecman Firm, PLLC have handled all types of cases including civil rights violations. David Perecman, founder of the Firm, is a Board Director and the past Secretary and Treasurer of the New York State Trial Lawyers Association (NYSTLA) and a chair of its Labor Law Committee. Mr. Perecman's achievements have brought him recognition as an Honoree in the National Law Journal's Hall of Fame, in New York Magazine's "The Best Lawyers in America" and The New York Times Magazine "New York Super Lawyers, Metro Edition" for the years 2007-2010.

The Firm has recovered millions of dollars for its clients. Among the more recent victories, Mr. Perecman won a \$15 million verdict* for a construction accident, a \$5.35 million dollar verdict** for an automobile accident, and a and a \$40 million dollar structured settlement for medical malpractice****.

*later settled while on appeal for \$7.940 million

** later settled for \$3.5 million

*** later settled for \$90,000.00

**** total potential payout

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