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Lizzo Lawsuit – Former Dancers Suing for (Alleged) Harassment and Creating a Hostile Work Environment

Lizzo, the pop icon and Grammy-award-winning singer known for body-positivity, was sued in a California Court by three former back-up singers for claims including harassment based on sex, religion, race, and disability, along with assault and false imprisonment.

According to the lawsuit, Lizzo and her production team/dance team captain subjected the dancers to “an overtly sexual atmosphere that permeated their workplace,” unwanted sexual situations, and body/weight shaming that ended with one of the dancers being terminated for her weight-gain. One allegation that seems to have riled up the media is the dancers being pressured into engaging (and that is putting it lightly) with nude performers at a club in Amsterdam.

The lawsuit further alleges that two of the dancers were terminated in the spring of 2023, and the other resigned shortly after. They are seeking unspecified damages, which include requests for losses in earnings, employment benefits, and mental/emotional distress.

Lizzo has only issued one statement in response, which denies all the allegations.

Lizzo’s lawsuit comes at a time where “cancel culture” is on the rise and reminds us of the impact these allegations can have, and the consequences that may result. It also gives a chance to pause and reflect on workplace harassment (as a whole), and what employers can do to help eliminate the risk of this happening to employees and their businesses.

Some key tips for employers to remember:

- Set **clear and defined** policies prohibiting discrimination, harassment, and retaliation and procedures for reporting the same. At a minimum, an effective reporting procedure must offer at least two options for reporting.
- Review and update these policies regularly (at least annually). Make sure your reporting avenues line up to current people, job titles, phone numbers, and email addresses. Make sure your policy addresses outside of work conduct.
- Promptly and effectively investigate complaints.
- Implement anti-harassment training and conduct it regularly. Ensure managers or anyone designated to receive reports knows they are designated as such and are trained to recognize complaints and handle them appropriately.
- Reiterate the company’s commitment against retaliation in applicable policies, training, and at the beginning and end of any investigatory interview.

As these tips are brief, they do not outline the complete steps employers can take to prevent workplace harassment. To best implement your policies and procedures and better prevent harassment or retaliation, employers should seek counsel from experienced employment attorneys. Please contact us if you want to discuss effective anti-harassment policies and practices, anti-harassment training, or our investigative services, or any questions you have about these issues.

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact [McKenzie Meade](mailto:mmeade@lehrmiddlebrooks.com) at mmeade@lehrmiddlebrooks.com.