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Sexual Harassment – Verdicts & Settlements Over \$100,000

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Michigan appeals court affirms a **\$21 million** verdict for a woman who endured seven years of harassment. *Gilbert v. Daimler-Chrysler*, #227392, 2002 Mich. App. Lexis 1168 (Unpub. Mich.App. 2002). {N/R}

A \$30 million punitive damages jury verdict against a private employer has been cut to **\$8.25 million** by the judge. *Gober v. Ralphs Grocery*, Super. Ct. #N72142, San Diego Co. Calif., rptd. in the S.F. Recorder (7/17/2002). {N/R}

Los Angeles pays **\$4.5 million** to the family of a teenager molested by a uniformed officer. *Doe v. Tanabe*, summary in 28 (19) Bus. Insur. 4, L.A. Co., Cal. Super. Ct. 1994). [1994 FP 141]

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Male officer wins **\$3.75 million** verdict; other recent awards, reductions and settlements noted. *Lockley v. New Jersey*, #L-03195-94, Burlington Co. N.J., 37 (1817) G.E.R.R. (BNA) 693 (5/28/1999). [1999 FP 108-9]

Three women police officers who won **\$3.5 million** for sexual harassment settle their claims for \$4 million. The settlement includes \$3 million from the city and \$1 million from a law firm that was sued by the plaintiffs in a second lawsuit for allegedly defamatory remarks made by counsel after the jury verdict. *Frieders v. City of Glendale*, #BC263271, 42 (2086) G.E.R.R. (BNA) 1167 (Cal. Super. 11/12/04). {N/R}

Calif. Superior Court reduces a \$6.9 million verdict to **\$3.5 million**. Secretary proved a partner in a law firm sexually harassed her. *Weeks v. Baker & McKenzie*, 66 FEP Cases (BNA) 581 (Cal. Super. 1994). {N/R}

Jury awards **\$3.1 million** to two women police officers who were sexually harassed by male coworkers. *Clerkin v. City of Long Beach*; *Allison v. City of Long Beach*, U.S. Dist. Ct. (C.D. Cal. 1991), summary in *L.A. Times* 10/14/93. [1991 FP 170]

San Francisco suburb to pay almost **\$2 million** in damages and legal costs to settle a sexual harassment suit brought by four women ex-officers, who claimed they suffered indignities, received different treatment and were denied promotional opportunities because of their gender. *Wowak v. City of Sunnyvale*, #5:03-cv-00394, case dismissed; settlement reported at 174 *Lab. Rltns. Rptr.* (BNA) 466 (N.D. Cal. 5/6/04). [2004 FP Sep]

Woman security officer accepts **\$1.5 million** settlement for enduring sexual harassment by male officers. *Doe v. Confidential Employer*, 107 (193) L.A.D.J. (Verd. & Setlmnts.) 6, L.A. Co., Cal. Super.Ct. Dept. 54 (1994). [1995 FP 28]

First Circuit upholds a jury award of **\$1,205,000** in compensatory damages and \$1,027,501 in punitive damages against a police union and others. A woman union member alleged sexual harassment during a union event, and a union official made threatening and intimidating remarks about her on television. *Dixon v. IBPO L-382*, #06-1210, 2007 U.S. App. Lexis 22891, 101 FEP Cases (BNA) 1121 (1st Cir.).

Federal jury awards **\$1 million** in compensatory damages to a male NYC corrections officer that alleged he had been subjected to a hostile work environment by a woman captain's unwelcome sexual proposals. *Singleton v. City of New York*, #05-7769, 45 (2197) G.E.R.R. (BNA) 312 (S.D.N.Y. 2007).

First Circuit upholds a jury verdict for more than **\$1 million** in favor of a Puerto Rican police officer who claimed that a sergeant sexually harassed her and management took no remedial action. The panel found that the amount was neither excessive nor conscience-shocking, because the plaintiff proved severe economic and emotional injury, including the loss of her house and car, insomnia, anxiety, and depression. *Valentín-Almeyda v. Munic. of Aguadilla*, #04-2413, 447 F.3d 85, 2006 U.S. App. Lexis 11584 (1st Cir. 2006). {N/R}

Two court employees accept **\$1 million** to settle their sexual harassment lawsuit. They claimed they were routinely subjected to obscene sexual comments by male co-workers and supervisors and that nothing was done to correct the problem. *Wayman v. San Bernardino Co.*, #273502, 37 (1842) G.E.R.R. (BNA) 1618. (Cal.Super. 1999). {N/R}

Female police officer recovers **\$900,000** for emotional distress and sexual solicitation by superior officers. *Preston v. Douglas*, Unrptd., Wayne Co. Mich. Cir. Ct. #84-414100-NI, 19 Media & Govt. Qtrly. (JVRS) 2 (1987).

A California city has paid **\$900,000** to settle a sexual discrimination and harassment suit brought by a former Fire Dept. contract physician. *Braun v. San Francisco*, Cal.Super. #969799, 36 G.E.R.R. (BNA) #1757 (1998). [1998 FP 78]

Woman police sergeant wins for verbal abuse, harassment and retaliation. *Hurley v. Atlantic City Police Dept.*, #93260 & 94-122, 34 (1659) G.E.R.R. (BNA) 498 (D.N.J. 1996). [1996 FP 108]; Note: verdict later reduced to **\$875,000**, of which \$700,000 was punitive. See 933 F.Supp. 396 {N/R}

New York State Div. of Human Rights awards **\$850,000** in compensatory damages for the harassment of a lesbian corrections officer. The agency found that she was subjected to a "daily, relentless regimen of humiliating insults" placing her in an "extremely serious and dangerous situation" by disclosing her sexual orientation to inmates. *Humig v. New York State Dept. of Corr. Servs.*, #7905228 (N.Y. Div. of Hum. Rts.10/11/07), summarized at 45 (2227) G.E.R.R. (BNA) 1213.

New Jersey Supreme Court affirms a **\$750,000** compensatory damage award to a male officer who claimed harassment by a woman coworker. It set aside a \$3 million in punitive damages against the Dept. of Corrections, and remanded the case because of faulty jury instructions. *Lockley v. State of New Jersey DoC*, #A-108-2001, 177 N.J. 413, 828 A.2d 869, 2003 N.J. Lexis 868 (N.J. 2003). {N/R}
{N/R}

Former police officer wins **\$700,000** in compensatory and \$1 million in punitive damages for enduring repeated sexual and derogatory remarks. *Barth v. Vil.of Mokena*, #03 Civ 6677, Pacer Doc. 330 (N. D. Ill.2006). Prior rulings at: 2006 U.S. Dist. Lexis 19702, 97 FEP Cases (BNA) 1764 (3/31/2006); at 2004 U.S. Dist. Lexis 8316 (5/7/2004); and at 2004 U.S. Dist. Lexis 2789 (2/24/2004). [2006 FP Sep]

Federal jury awards Santa Clara sheriff's deputy **\$700,000** for emotional distress in a sexual harassment lawsuit. *Murphy v. County of Santa Clara*, #C-89-2328-CAL, U.S. Dist. Ct. (N.D. Cal. 10/3/91). [1992 FP 12]

Federal jury awards **\$658,000** in compensatory and \$100,000 in punitive damages to four Mississippi women firefighters who sued over a sexually hostile environment and retaliation by their superiors and coworkers. The misconduct allegedly included sexual

advances, intimidation, and offering money or gifts in exchange for sex. *Alexander v. Jackson*, #3:04-cv-614, Pacer Doc. 168 & 169 (S.D. Miss. 2007); verdict reported at 45 (2211) G.E.R.R. (BNA) 728.

FBI settles three sexual harassment cases for a total of **\$645,000**. *Doucette v. Reno*, #CIV 93-1198, 33 (1602) G.E.R.R. 222 (C.D.Ariz. 1995); *Alduenda v. Reno* (C.D.Cal. 1995); *Power-Anderson v. U.S.*, #SA-CV-94-43 (C.D.Cal. 1995). [1995 FP 76-7]

Woman officer recovers **\$625,000** for emotional distress. She alleged that male officers first harassed her and then caused her to be terminated. *Hoban v. County of Riverside*, Docket #219376, 108 (90) L.A.D.J. (Verd. & Setlmts.) 14 (Cal.Super. 1997). [1997 FP 105]

Appellate court affirms a jury award of **\$625,000** in compensatory and \$500,000 in punitive damages. Although the conduct was not especially severe, it continued for many years. *Mancini v. Twp. of Teaneck*, #A-2186-00T5, 794 A.2d 185, 2002 N.J. Super. Lexis 165 (N.J. App. 2002). [2002 FP Jul]

Woman trooper in Louisiana is awarded **\$600,000**. *Mistretta v. Louisiana*, #95-754-B-M1, 36 G.E.R.R. (BNA) 726 (M.D.La. 1998). [1998 FP 141]

Sheriff's investigator awarded **\$500,000** against the county and \$200,000 against a superior who allegedly put his face in the plaintiff's crotch, and twice bit her on the buttocks. *Kessel v. Cook County*, #1:00cv03980 (N.D.Ill. 2003). {N/R}

Illinois counties are required by statute to indemnify sheriffs for judgments and settlements against them for all official acts, and a county was required to pay a **\$500,000** consent judgment for sexual harassment. *Carver v. Sheriff of La Salle County*, #91108, 91 FEP Cases (BNA) 29, 2003 Ill. Lexis 13 (Ill. 2003). Also see 243 F.3d 379, 2001 U.S. App. Lexis 3934 (7th Cir. Ill. 2001). {N/R}

California appeals court affirms a sexual harassment award against a city housing authority in the amounts of **\$500,000** for emotional distress damages, \$173,866 in interest, \$611,898 in attorneys' fees, and \$11,986 in costs and \$30,000 in discovery sanctions. *Walker v. San Francisco Housing Auth.*, #A0954767, 100 Cal.App.4th 685, 122 Cal.Rptr.2d 758, 2002 Cal. App. Lexis 4442 (2002). {N/R}

Federal jury in Chicago has awards **\$500,000** to a former manager in the office of the Inspector General of Cook County. *Roberts v. Cook County*, #01 C 9373, (N.D. Ill. 2004); prior interim ruling at 213 F. Supp.2d 882 (2002). [2004 FP Apr]

Police dispatcher accepts **\$500,000** to drop her suit alleging she was fondled, was repeatedly solicited for sex and was required to view a pornographic video. *Naholnik v. Town of Waterford*, #3:93-CV-00683 (RNC), 34 (1671) G.E.R.R. (BNA) 904 (D.Conn. 1996). [1996 FP 139-40]

Corrections technician awarded **\$480,000** against a California sheriff's dept. for enduring 20 months of harassment. *Barbour v. Co. of Orange*, Super.Ct. #727213, 109 (251) L.A.D.J. (Verd. & Setlmts.) 9 (1996). [1997 FP 27]

Public employer pays **\$435,000** to employees who inadvertently saw porn pics on computers owned by the city. Management failed to respond to their complaints. *Adamson v. Minneapolis Public Library*, #03-CV-2521 (D. Minn. 2003). [2003 FP Nov]

An appellate court in Wisconsin upholds a **\$389,434** verdict plus one year of future pay for a former paramedic who claimed she was sexually harassed by her supervisor. *Salveson v. Douglas Co.*, #99-0946, 2000 WI App 80, 234 Wis. 2d 413, 2000 Wis.App. Lexis 267, 38 (1859) G.E.R.R. 518 (3/28/00). [2000 FP 92]

\$50 million verdict reduced to **\$350,000**. Employer had anti-harassment and "open door" employee policies. *Kimzey v. Wal-Mart Stores*, 107 F.3d 568, 73 FEP Cases (BNA) 87, 1997 U.S.App. Lexis 2853 (8th Cir.). [1997 FP 61]

EEOC suit in behalf of a woman truck driver results in a verdict for \$101,400 in backpay, \$290,000 in front pay, **\$350,000** for emotional suffering and \$2.5 million in punitive damages, for a total award of \$3,241,400. *EEOC v. Fed Ex*, #1:02-cv-1194 (M.D. Pa. verdict 2004). {N/R}

Jury awards woman fire captain **\$347,000**. \$100,000 was punitive damages for a sexually hostile environment; \$50,000 was for retaliation she suffered after reporting the harassment. Another \$150,000 in punitives was for discriminatory treatment. Her attorney was seeking a fee award of about \$500,000. *Kline v. City of Kansas City*, #94-0723-CV-W-3, 35 (1743) G.E.R.R. (BNA) 1567 (W.D.Mo. 1997). {N/R}

Houston jury awards **\$310,00** to a sheriff's deputy for harassment and retaliation. *McKenzie v. San Patricio County*, #C-97-131, 36 G.E.R.R. (BNA) #1757 (S.D.Tex. 1998). [1998 FP 78]

Eleventh Circuit vacates a sexual harassment verdict of \$400,000 and remands for an entry of judgment of **\$300,000**. *Bradshaw v. School Bd. of Broward Co.*, #06-13182, 2007 U.S. App. Lexis 11354 (11th Cir.).

Federal judge sets aside a \$3 million verdict for sexual harassment of a woman police officer as "grossly excessive;" damages reduced to **\$300,000**. *Spina v. Forest Preserve Dist. of Cook Co.*, #98-C-1393, 207 F.Supp.2d 764, 2002 U.S. Dist. Lexis 9818 (N.D.Ill. 2002); interim rulings at: 2001 U.S. Dist. Lexis 19146 (11-22-2001); 2001 U.S. Dist. Lexis 11670, 86 FEP Cases (BNA) 1099 (8-6-2001); 1999 U.S. Dist. Lexis 18832 (11-29-1999). [2002 FP Feb]

\$2 million verdict capped at **\$300,000**. Worker suffered post traumatic stress disorder from the harassment and a supervisor's threat against her. *Holmes v. Wal-Mart Stores*, #95-137-CIV-FTM-25D, 1997 FEP Summary (BNA) 120 (M.D.Fla. 1996). {N/R}

Federal jury awarded a woman \$2.75 million because male coworkers played loud, sexually explicit music at work and management took no action. The court reduced the award to **\$300,000** plus \$113,000 in legal fees. *Strain v. Lear Corp.*, #00-C-05295 (Unrptd. W.D. Wis., 4/4/2001). {N/R}

Woman police lieutenant who recovered **\$290,000** for sexual harassment in 1985, receives \$73,400 in a second suit claiming further discrimination and retaliation. *Arnold v. City of Seminole*, 614 F.Supp. 853 (E.D. Okla. 1985) as Rptd. in *The Wall Street Journal*, p. B-3 (10/18/91).

City worker awarded **\$275,000** for retaliation; she complained of obscene language during a cable TV show shown in the employee break room. *Ericson v. City of Meriden*, #3:99CV2143 (D. Conn.), *Connecticut Law Tribune* (Oct. 8, 2001); prior ruling at 113 F.Supp.2d 276, 2000 U.S. Dist. Lexis 14496. [2001 FP 157]

Federal appeals court reinstates a **\$275,000** verdict for a woman firefighter and rejects the city's argument that firefighter behavior should be evaluated in the context of a blue-collar environment. *O'Rourke v. City of Providence*, #99-2346 & 00-1008, 2001 U.S. App. Lexis 165, 235 F.3d 71, 85 FEP Cases (BNA) 1135 (1st Cir.). [2001 FP 123-4]

Mass. town ordered to pay **\$253,572** for mistreatment of a civilian dispatcher who was subjected to profanity and demeaning work assignments (washing dishes). *Baldelli v. Southborough Police Dept.*, #88-WEM-0041, 33 (1631) G.E.R.R. (1178) (Mass.C.A.D. 1995). {N/R}

Federal appeals court sustains damage awards against a police captain and a sergeant for tolerating sexually offensive work conditions. Verdicts against city totaled **\$230,000** and \$165,000 against the captain. *Andrews v. City of Philadelphia*, 895 F.2d 1469 (3rd Cir. 1990).

Sheriff's Dept. in Chicago pays **\$225,000** to settle a sexual harassment and wrongful termination suit brought by an administrative assistant against the Sheriff's Director of Operations. County also spent \$426,098 in legal defense fees. *Conway v. Walsh*, verdict rptd. at 37 (1816) G.E.R.R. (BNA) 663; prestlmt. opin. at 1999 U.S. Dist. Lexis 6979 (N.D.Ill. 1999). {N/R}

California city settles complaints of two women workers for **\$225,000**. *Doe and Roe v. City* (I.D. Confidential, L.A. Co. Super.Ct. (7/9/94), summary in 107 (154) L.A.D.J. (Verd. & Setlmts.) 8 (8/12/94). [1995 FP 12]

Woman officer in Oregon recovers **\$225,000** for harassment and retaliation for filing a complaint. Sheriff failed to give adequate discipline to offending deputy. *Mockler v. Multnomah Co.*, 140 F.3d 808, 76 FEP Cases (BNA) 890, 1998 U.S. App. Lexis 6440 (9th Cir.). [1998 FP 94]

NC corrections employee receives **\$217,000**, plus in \$97,678 in legal fees, to settle her harassment claim. *Robinson v. N.C. Dept. of Corrections*, #5:98-CV-584-BR-3, 37 (1828) G.E.R.R. (BNA) 1203 (E.D.N.C. 1999). {N/R}

County pays **\$200,000** to woman officer who claimed she was fondled by the chief; she was transferred after complaining about his conduct. *Doe v. County of Los Angeles, Los Angeles Co. Super.Ct.*, 109 (9) L.A.D.J. (V&S) 3 (1995). [1996 FP 45]

Four women officers in Minnesota recover **\$199,000**. *Kennedy v. St. Paul, Ramsey Co.*, #C6-93-8809, 36 G.E.R.R. (BNA) #1763 (Minn. Dist.Ct. 1998). [1998 FP 140-1]

Huntington Park (Calif.) woman police officer receives **\$187,500** to settle her sexual harassment lawsuit; three employees were removed, summary in L.A. Times 1/22/94. {N/R}

Former Minneapolis police officer recovers **\$165,000** for emotional distress and retaliation after filing a sexual harassment complaint. *Eggimann v. City of Mnpls.*, Unrptd., 4th Jud. Dist. #MC90-2204, 30 (1477) G.E.R.R. (BNA) 1126 (1992). [1992 FP 157-8]

Female police dispatcher wins **\$150,000** for mistreatment by a sergeant; he had pulled down her clothing so another officer could photograph her breast. [Sydney] *Brauer v. [Robert] White*, Unrptd., 136 (87) Chicago Daily Law Bull. 1 (5/2/90).

FBI pays a settlement of **\$150,000** plus attorneys fees to woman agent who complained of sexually-oriented teasing, harassment, and ridicule that was not only condoned by and participated in by her supervisors. *Anderson v. Reno*, 97-0747, settlement rptd. at 38 (1887) G.E.R.R. (BNA) 1284 (N.D. Cal.); prior decis. at 190 F.3d 930, 1999 U.S. App. Lexis 21387, 80 FEP Cases (BNA) 1663 (9th Cir. 1999). {N/R}

Woman Illinois State Police sergeant, who alleged that she was sexually harassed by her supervisor and then received negative performance ratings and inferior work assignments after she complained, wins a jury verdict of **\$146,000**. *Storey v. Ill. State Police*, #05CV-4011, verdict (S.D. Ill. 2006); prior rulings at 2006 U.S. Dist. Lexis 8127 and 57970.

Houston officer wins **\$128,000** in damages and \$200,617 in legal expenses because her sergeant failed to halt ongoing harassment by a coworker. *Williamson v. Houston*, 148 F.3d 462, 1998 U.S. App. Lexis 16771 (5th Cir.). [1999 FP 12]

Kentucky Supreme Court upholds a **\$120,000** compensatory damages verdict for a woman corrections officer who was passed over for promotion 26 times after she filed a sexual harassment complaint; punitive damages not available under state law. *Kentucky Dept. of Corr. v. McCullough*, #2000-SC-0727-DG, 2003 Ky. Lexis 180, 92 FEP Cases (BNA) 953 (Ky. 2003). {N/R}

Jury awards former Texas deputy sheriff **\$110,000** compensatory and \$200,000 in punitive damages for sexual harassment and retaliation. *McKenzie v. San Patricio Co.*, #C- 97-131, 36 G.E.R.R. (BNA) #1757 (S.D.Tex. 1998). [1998 FP 107-8]

Female former sheriff's deputy receives **\$109,600** judgment plus \$100,000 in legal fees for sexual touching. *Stewart v. Co. of Sonoma*, 634 F.Supp. 773 (N.D. Cal. 1986).

\$100,000 sexual harassment verdict awarded a woman police officer is affirmed by an appeals court. *Curry v. Dist. of Col.*, #98-7121, 338 U.S. App. D.C. 439, 195 F.3d 654, 1999 U.S. App. Lexis 29442, 81 FEP Cases (BNA) 307 (D.C. Cir. 1999). {N/R}