

Google Sued For Gender Discrimination By Female Former Employees

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Three former employees of Google have filed a class action lawsuit against the internet company, alleging a pattern of discrimination against women workers, including systemically lower pay than their male counterparts.

The lawsuit was filed by ex-Googlers Kelly Ellis, Holly Pease, and Kelli Wisuri in San Francisco Superior Court on Thursday, and follows a suit against the tech giant filed earlier this year by the United States Department of Labor, which said it found evidence of an "extreme" gender pay gap at the company.

The three claim that during the course of their respective time at Google, which spans, between them, from 2005 through 2016, the company "discriminated and continues to discriminate against its female employees by paying female employees less than male employees with similar skills, experience, and duties," reads the suit.

"The net result of this systemic discrimination is that Google pays women less than men for comparable work."

Kelly Ellis, an experienced software engineer, resigned from Google in 2014 after four years "because of the sexist culture," says the complaint.

The suit alleges that Ellis was "occupationally-segregated" into a front-end role because of a "false and gendered perception at Google that back-end software engineering is more technically rigorous, and therefore more prestigious." Ellis observed that "almost all back-end software engineers were men."

"I have come forward to correct a pervasive problem of gender bias at Google," said Ellis in a statement on Thursday. "It is time to stop ignoring these issues in tech."

Ellis and her two fellow plaintiffs claim to represent all women employed by Google and are seeking a jury trial. The class action case will draw on the Department of Labor's recent analysis, which found between six and seven standard deviations between wage rates of men and women based on a snapshot of the salaries of 21,000 workers at Google's Mountain View headquarters.

Google disputes Thursday's allegations, adding that they have "systems in place to ensure that [they] pay fairly."

"We work really hard to create a great workplace for everyone, and to give everyone the chance to thrive here," said spokesperson Gina Scigliano. "In relation to this particular lawsuit, we'll review it in detail, but we disagree with the central allegations."

"Job levels and promotions are determined through rigorous hiring and promotion committees, and must pass multiple levels of review, including checks to make sure there is no gender bias in these decisions. And we have extensive systems in place to ensure that we pay fairly. But on all these topics, if we ever see individual discrepancies or problems, we work to fix them, because Google has always sought to be a great employer, for every one of our employees."

