

# DFEH News Brief

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## **CALIFORNIA BUILDING MAINTENANCE COMPANY PAYS \$49,000.00 TO SETTLE EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION CASE**

**ELK GROVE, CA** -- The California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) today announced the \$49,000.00 settlement of a sexual harassment retaliation case against Somers Building Maintenance in McClellan, California.

The DFEH filed an Accusation with the Fair Employment and Housing Commission after receiving a complaint from a female employee accusing Somers Building Maintenance (SBM) of retaliating against her for complaining about sexual harassment.

"This case illustrates the vital role the Department of Fair Employment and Housing plays in vindicating the rights of all California employees," said DFEH Director, Phyllis Cheng. "The Fair Employment & Housing Act guarantees all who work in California the right to be free from workplace discrimination, harassment and retaliation – regardless of profession or income level."

Veronica González worked for SBM as a Janitorial Tech in Thousand Oaks when a manager who was not her supervisor allegedly sexually harassed her. According to the Accusation, Ms. González complained about the offender's repeated advances to various SBM supervisors and managers. After receiving the complaints, SBM allegedly permitted the alleged harasser to supervise Ms. González, requiring her to work long hours and perform such strenuous tasks she claims she developed neck and back pain so severe she became temporarily totally disabled. The Accusation further alleged that after she complained to her supervisors, the company required Ms. González to endure such intolerable working conditions she was forced to quit her job.

As part of the settlement, SBM also agreed to pay for its on-site supervisors and managers in California to undergo discrimination prevention training and to prominently display the Department's Spanish and English language anti-discrimination posters in all California locations where SBM provides any service. In settling with the DFEH, the janitorial and general building maintenance company did not admit to any liability.

"Californians need to know that despite the current economic climate, the DFEH will continue to prosecute civil rights violators and pursue justice for victims of discrimination or harassment wherever it is found," DFEH Director Cheng stated.

The mission of the DFEH is to protect the people of California from unlawful discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations and from hate violence. For more information, visit our Web site at [www.dfeh.ca.gov](http://www.dfeh.ca.gov). ###