

# Hostile mint case study

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Case - 1 Hostile Mint it's probably the last place you might expect to find a hostile work environment. First of all, it's a federal workplace. And even more surprising, it's heavily guarded against intrusion. But the situation inside the U. S. Mint in Denver was anything but a safe place for 71 women who brought a complaint to the facility's equal employment opportunity (EEO) officer in 2003. When the organizers of the complaint began to fear that they were the investigation targets instead of the complaints, 32 of the women decided to take the matter to the U. S.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Their contention: The Denver Mint was a hostile work environment. These allegations were the culmination of a number of incidents that had occurred over a long period of time. The Denver Mint, which opened in 1863, has 414 employees, of which 93 are women. One woman who started working at the Denver Mint in 1997 said, " She found the atmosphere completely hostile toward females. " When she filed an EEO charge claiming discrimination, she was retaliated against by having most of her job duties reassigned and being required to work at home.

Events leading to the current complaint started in 2001, when another female employee who was inspecting a men's room for cleanliness saw a loose ceiling tile, removed it, and found 40 to 50 sex magazines. Some months later, this same employee was checking for rats in an attic and found a stash of pornographic magazines. Both times she made these discoveries, she was with a male colleague. Later, she would say in a statement given to the main office of the U. S. Mint that to her knowledge no action was ever taken to address the situations.

Another female employee filed a claim of retaliation and sexual harassment with the facility's EEO officer in 2000. It was 2003 before she got a hearing with the EEOC and an administrative judge ruled in favor of the Mint. However, when she filed her claims in federal court in 2005, a jury found that she " worked in an environment hostile to women and awarded her \$80, 000. " In 2001, the facility's new superintendent held a women's forum attended by the then-director of the U. S. Mint. However, the highest-ranking woman at the Denver Mint—the administrative services chief, Beverly Mandigo Milne—said, " Nothing changed. " The final straw that triggered the complaint was the demotion of the mint's acting EEO manager in February 2003. The month after the demotion, the 71 women filed the petition alleging a hostile work environment. An individual from the San Francisco Mint was assigned to investigate; however, the women claimed that the investigation never focused on the facts, but on Milne. One of the women said, " They believed that Beverly coerced everyone into filing the petition. " That was when 32 of the women took the matter to the EEOC.

Despite the filed petition, hostile situations still continued. One woman said that in 2004, a male co-worker offered to pay her for sex. Another woman said that after she returned after a short bereavement leave following her husband's death in 2005, a male supervisor propositioned her. On March 31, 2006, the U. S. Mint and the female employees who had filed the class complaint reached a proposed settlement. The terms of the settlement included a payment of \$8. 9 million for damages, fees, and costs. The joint press release of the United States Mint and Class Couns