



February 17, 2025

GENERAL NEWS

DOJ Settles Sexual Harassment Suit against New Mexico Property Manager

In a [press release](#) last Thursday, the Department of Justice ([DOJ](#)) announced that the owners and former property manager of a federally subsidized apartment complex in Albuquerque, New Mexico, have agreed to pay \$360,000 to resolve a lawsuit alleging that the former property manager sexually harassed female tenants in violation of the [Fair Housing Act](#).

The lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico, alleges that for more than a decade, the former property manager sexually harassed female tenants by making unwelcome sexual comments, touching without consent, locking female tenants in his office to demand sex acts, and threatening to evict female tenants who did not give in to his sexual demands. The lawsuit also names as defendants the owners and operators of the apartments, alleging that they are vicariously liable for the sexual harassment of their agent.

Under the consent decree, which still must be approved by the district court, the defendants must pay \$350,000 to tenants harmed by the harassment and a \$10,000 civil penalty to the United States. The consent decree permanently bars the former property manager from contacting tenants harmed by his harassment, permanently bars him from managing residential rental properties, and mandates training and the adoption of policies and procedures to prevent future discrimination at residential rental properties owned or managed by the defendants.



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