

Jan 9, 2018 PCWG watch Arizona: GEO settles sexual harassment suit for peanuts

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Private Prison Firm Paying \$550,000 in Ariz. Harassment Case

U.S. officials say a private prison company will pay a settlement of \$550,000 to be shared by 16 women who were dismissed from their jobs at Arizona correctional facilities in 2012 after complaining of sexual harassment.

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PHOENIX (AP) — A Florida-based private prison company must pay a settlement of \$550,000 to be shared by 16 women who were dismissed from their jobs at Arizona correctional facilities after complaining of sexual harassment, U.S. officials said Monday.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission announced the deal with the GEO Group, Inc., of Boca Raton, Florida, which operates the Central Arizona Correctional Facility and the Arizona State Prison-Florence West Facility.

The commission and the Arizona Civil Rights Division of the Attorney General's Office filed the suit alleging a variety of sexual harassment and retaliation at the two facilities from 2006-2012. The misconduct included sexual assault by a male manager against a female officer that involved grabbing and pinching, and a male employee forcing a woman employee onto a desk. It also included numerous instances of verbal harassment such as male officers asking female officers for sex.

The company said that it took measures after the lawsuit was filed, including enhanced training, reporting, and monitoring, and there had been no new complaints since. "The GEO Group mandates zero tolerance towards all forms of sexual harassment in all its facilities," it said in a Monday statement.

Under a similar consent decree announced in August, GEO Group paid \$60,000 to a former female employee in Arizona who alleged sexual harassment and retaliation at the facility in Florence.