

# Sabra Dipping Co. sued over wage and hour violations

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*Lawsuit: Management discriminated against an employee over her disability, religion*

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, USA, April 18, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Hummus maker Sabra Dipping Co. regularly violated wage and hour laws and retaliated against a woman who complained of discrimination based on her age, disability and religion, according to a new lawsuit.



... Sabra should be held accountable for their unfair and unscrupulous employment practices, which aim to take advantage of employees who fear they'll be fired or be subjected to retaliation..."

*Attorney Kamran Shahabi*

The lawsuit seeks class action status for hundreds of factory employees, accusing Sabra Dipping Co. with failing to correctly pay workers for time worked and overtime; making employees skip, shorten, or be on-call during meal and break periods without paying the state-mandated premium for doing so; and failing to keep accurate records of hours worked and earned vacation hours.

A Sabra manager named in the lawsuit is accused of harassment, discrimination and retaliation in the January

2018 wrongful firing of Laura Ochoa. First hired in July 2014, Ochoa developed respiratory problems in 2016 and 2017, requiring hospitalization. Ochoa's doctor determined that her illness stemmed from using non-OSHA compliant masks issued by Sabra for the factory workers, according to the lawsuit.

When she alerted manager Sergio Sandoval, he told her she was lucky to have work, then reassigned her to a refrigerated area of the factory, the lawsuit said. This further aggravated her respiratory illness and eventually forced her to go out on disability. She was fired while on disability leave, the lawsuit said.

In addition to the disability discrimination, Ochoa, who is over 40 and a Jehovah's Witness, "was constantly ridiculed by her supervisors and peers because of her age and religion," according to the lawsuit. Harassment included being told she was too old to be driving, being told that only "crazy people" belonged to her religion, and asked if she was "trying to recruit more crazy people into her cult..." Sabra managers failed to investigate her complaints about this discriminatory treatment, according to the lawsuit.

"Large corporations such as Sabra should be held accountable for their unfair and unscrupulous employment practices, which aim to take advantage of employees who fear they'll be fired or be subjected to retaliation for speaking up," said Attorney [Kamran Shahabi](#), who specializes in employment law as managing partner at [Valiant Law](#) of Ontario, Calif. "Sabra and its managers threatened employees with discipline and termination if they resisted their illegal actions, but Ms. Ochoa had the courage to stand against Sabra and fight for justice for not only herself but for the other hardworking and vulnerable laborers at Sabra."

The lawsuit was filed Jan. 18 in Los Angeles Superior Court but has since been transferred to San Diego County Superior Court for the convenience of all parties involved. Ochoa worked exclusively at Sabra's Oceanside, California facility, located in San Diego County. The lawsuit names Ochoa as the plaintiff but claims as many as 250 other hourly employees also were

subject to the same wage-law violations. Sabra Dipping Co. is based in White Plains, N.Y., with multiple manufacturing plants across the country.

Valiant Law represents various individuals and entities in all aspects of employment claims, including harassment and discrimination, and wage and hour class actions in state and federal courts. With over a decade of legal practice in Southern California, including the Inland Empire, Los Angeles, Orange County, Riverside, San Diego County, as well as Las Vegas.

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