



California Civil Rights Department v. Activision Blizzard, Inc., Activision Publishing, Inc. and Blizzard Entertainment, Inc.

FAQ

Los Angeles County Superior Court: California Civil Rights Department v. Activision Blizzard, Inc., Activision Publishing, Inc. and Blizzard Entertainment, Inc. Case No. 21STCV26571

1 | What is the California Civil Rights Department (“CRD”)?

CRD, formerly known as the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (“DFEH”), is the California state agency tasked with investigating and prosecuting civil rights actions including sexual harassment and employment discrimination.

2 | Who are the Defendants?

Activision Blizzard, Inc. (“Activision Blizzard”), Blizzard Entertainment, Inc. (“Blizzard”), and Activision Publishing, Inc. (“Activision Publishing”) are the defendants (“Activision Defendants”). Activision Blizzard, Inc. is headquartered in Santa Monica, California. It is one of the largest American video game developers and distributors with approximately 9,500 employees and over 100 million players worldwide. It is considered a leading gaming platform in the western world, and it is a member of the Fortune 500 and S&P 500. Activision Blizzard conducts business through its subsidiaries, Blizzard Entertainment, Inc., King Digital Entertainment, and Activision Publishing, Inc., among others. Activision Blizzard also operates global esports organizations, Overwatch League and Call of Duty League. The video game franchise Call of Duty is Activision Publishing’s key product. Blizzard Entertainment maintains the online gaming service, Battle.net, and includes key franchises such as World of Warcraft, Diablo, and Overwatch.

3 | When was the lawsuit filed?

July 20, 2021. CRD filed an [amended complaint](#) on August 23, 2021.

4 | What does CRD allege in the lawsuit against Activision?

CRD alleges that female employees and contingent or temporary workers employed by the Activision Defendants worked in an environment that was akin to working in a “frat house”, which invariably involved male employees drinking and subjecting female employees and contingent or temporary workers to sexual harassment, with little to no repercussions for the male employees. As a product of this “frat boy” culture, women were subjected to numerous sexual comments and advances, groping and unwanted physical touching, and other forms of harassment.

CRD also alleges that women across the company are assigned to lower pay and lower opportunity levels. Female employees receive lower starting pay and also earn less than male employees for substantially similar work. Defendants promote women more slowly and terminate them more quickly than their male counterparts. Faced with such adverse terms and conditions of employment, many women have been forced to leave the company.

CRD also alleges that Defendants have engaged in and continue to perpetuate discriminatory practices regarding pay, assignment, promotion and other terms and conditions of employment which negatively affect and impact female employees and contingent or temporary workers.

5 | Are contingent and temporary workers included in the allegations?

Yes. CRD alleges that contingent and temporary female workers suffered sexual harassment and gender discrimination. Activision sought to have those workers removed from the lawsuit, but its [motion](#) was denied by the Superior Court.

6 | Who is impacted by the CRD lawsuit?

CRD brings this government enforcement action for group relief on behalf of itself in the public interest and all aggrieved females who were formerly or currently employed by the Activision Defendants in California.

7 | Is the CRD lawsuit the same as the EEOC lawsuit?

No, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (“EEOC”) is a federal agency. The EEOC filed a lawsuit against Activision Blizzard in 2021 in federal court, asserting federal law claims. The EEOC immediately reached a settlement with Activision and filed a proposed consent decree.

The CRD is a California agency that filed a separate lawsuit asserting state law claims against Activision Blizzard on behalf of the State of California that is currently being litigated in state court, in the Los Angeles Superior Court.

8 | If I participated in the EEOC lawsuit can I participate in the CRD lawsuit?

It is CRD’s position that participation in the EEOC lawsuit does not preclude individuals from participating in CRD’s lawsuit. Activision Blizzard may seek to exclude those who participate in the EEOC settlement from participating in the CRD lawsuit. Ultimately, the Court may decide whether participation in the EEOC lawsuit prevents individuals from participating in the CRD case, but no such decision has been rendered at this time.

9 | Was the CRD lawsuit settled?

No, the CRD lawsuit remains very active in the Los Angeles Superior Court. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (“EEOC”) brought a case against Activision Blizzard in federal court, and that case has settled.

10 | Who do I contact to provide information or ask questions about the lawsuit and Activision’s sexual harassment and discriminatory practices?

You can call CRD at (833) 525-4333 or email CRD at blizzard.dfeh@dfeh.ca.gov.