

Worker Hits A&E With Age Bias, Sex Harassment Suit

By [Grace Elletson](#) · 2023-07-12 15:23:52 -0400 · [Listen to article](#)

An [A&E Television Networks LLC](#) employee sued the cable company in Connecticut federal court, claiming she was sexually harassed by an executive and repeatedly overlooked for promotions because of her older age.



An employee of A&E Television Networks says the cable company failed to stop an executive's overly friendly behavior and declined to promote her after 25 years. (Andrew H. Walker/[Getty Images](#) for A&E Networks)

Jenice E. Jeter said in the [Tuesday suit](#) that A&E — which owns TV brands including the History Channel and Lifetime — violated Title VII and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act when it failed to stop an executive's overly friendly behavior and declined to promote her after working for the company for 25 years.

"Despite plaintiff's determination to remain optimistic about, and committed, to her career at

A&E, the ruthless discrimination and retaliation she continues to suffer at the network has rendered plaintiff distraught and crest fallen," Jeter said in the complaint.

Jeter, who is in her 60s, said she began working for the network in 1998 as an administrative assistant and has a master's degree in administration. After working for the company for two decades, she said she's only been given a title change, and has repeatedly lost out on promotions to younger candidates.

When Jeter interviewed for a promotion in 2013, she said, she asked her then-manager why he seemed upset that she was interviewing for the open position. Jeter said he responded "it's because of your age." While Jeter said she complained about the interaction to the company's human resources director, nothing was done about her manager's behavior.

Jeter said she consistently made it known to higher-ups that she sought a promotion to a supervisory position, but they would repeatedly dismiss her desires and additional work to obtain those roles.

In one instance when Jeter inquired about an open manager position, her supervisor laughed and said there wasn't an open position available, but another colleague moved into the role later that year, she said. In 2021, Jeter said, her supervisor dismissed another request that she be considered for a promotion, stating that she "wanted to give others a chance for that role."

Network higher-ups said Jeter wasn't being considered for the promotions due to her "communication skills," an excuse that Jeter called clear pretext in her complaint. She said she had been previously praised for her willingness to raise questions and concerns in the office, but after she complained about her supervisor's favoritism, she was chastised in a 2022 performance review for raising comments that were "counterproductive to open dialogue" and collaboration in the office.

Jeter also said she was regularly sexually harassed by the network's broadcast operations vice president. She said he would send her inappropriate emails stating, "I saw you walking by and liked how your hair was blowing in the wind," or "I hope to see you today." She also said he would make flirtatious compliments, repeatedly walk by her office and attempt to schedule one-on-one meetings to be alone with her.

She said she was also subjected to a hostile work environment when she moved into the broadcast operations department in 2016. Jeter said that she was treated coldly by colleagues

and ignored during staff meetings and that her counterparts would mockingly say "God is good" in front of her knowing that Jeter was a practicing minister.

When Jeter complained about the vice president's behavior and her supervisor's favoritism toward other workers to HR in 2021, she was retaliated against with a negative performance review in 2022 and another promotion denial, she said. After initiating a written complaint in 2022 to HR, Jeter said her concerns could not be substantiated by the company after an HR representative conducted a lackluster investigation.

Attorney Parisis G. Filippatos, who represents Jeter, told Law360 he aims to hold A&E accountable for its alleged illegal treatment of his client.

"Such corporate conduct runs afoul of the anti-discrimination statutes that we are confident a jury of her peers will enforce on behalf of our client," Filippatos said.

A spokesperson for A&E did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Jeter is represented by Parisis G. Filippatos of [Filippatos PLLC](#).

Counsel for A&E was not yet available.

The case is Jeter v. A&E Television Networks LLC, case number [3:23-cv-00922](#), in [U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut](#).

--Editing by Amy Rowe.

Update: This article has been updated with a comment from Jeter's attorney.

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0 Comments

Parisis Filippatos

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