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## CBS Hit With \$1M Discrimination & Retaliation Suit By Former Finance Executive

By **Dominic Patten**

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Moving ever closer to its reunion with Viacom, CBS today finds its corporate culture again in the spotlight with a \$1 million-plus discrimination and retaliation lawsuit from the company's former director of international treasury.

Mexican national and green card holder Maria Solache held the pivotal currency trading gig at CBS from 2014-18. Let go for a very short stint in 2015 due to an immigration snafu, Solache even saw a 44% pay raise when the company was being probed by the Obama administration's Department of Labor — not that the raise from around \$160,000 to \$227,000 or the finance exec's permanent employment lasted long, it seems.

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“The essence of Ms. Solache’s claim is that Defendant treated her differently from other employees, underpaid her because of her national origin, failed to give her a title or salary commensurate with her position and responsibilities, and, when Ms. Solache questioned the manner in which she was being treated, Defendants retaliated against her by manufacturing a pretext for its termination of Ms. Solache’s employment,” the multiple-claim and jury-demanding complaint filed Monday in federal court declares (read it here).

On June 25 last year and not long after making rumblings about being treated unfairly, the internally praised Solache suddenly was ditched for “insubordination.” Despite run-ins with her immediate superiors, the designation came from a trade Solache made that she says was allowed under the responsibilities she had “by letter directly from then-Chief Operating Officer of CBS, Joe Ianello.”

Someone at CBS didn’t see it that way.

CBS did not respond to a request for comment on the lawsuit when contacted by Deadline today. However, Solache had a thing or two to say about what was the policy at CBS and what happened to her, allegedly.

“The actions of Defendants throughout Ms. Solache’s employment with CBS contravenes, inter alia, Federal, City, and State anti discrimination statutes, as well as Defendants’ own rules and regulations,” the paperwork from attorney Neal Brickman adds, naming both CBS and Jim Morrison in the case now before Judge J. Paul Oetken.

Morrison was the VP, Assistant Treasurer in the Corporate Treasury Group at CBS and Solache’s direct supervisor for all practical purposes.

“Despite the fact that Plaintiff had enjoyed a well-deserved positive reputation for her performance in the three and one-half years she worked at CBS, shortly after she raised questions to her employer regarding the disparate treatment in salary and job title to which she was subjected, a pretextual reason to terminate her was created, and she was terminated,” the 13-page to the point filing notes.

Once repeatedly slammed as a very white and very male network on both sides of the camera, CBS has pledged a variety of initiatives in recent years to course correct — though clearly not in time for Maria Solache, according to her suit.

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