

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA

**JENA LEWIS,**

**Plaintiff,**

**vs.**

**CASE NO:**

**GUEST SERVICES  
HOSPITALITY, INC.,**

**Defendant.**

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**COMPLAINT**

**COMES NOW**, the Plaintiff, **JENA LEWIS**, who, by and through her undersigned counsel(s), hereby sues the Defendant, Guest Services Hospitality, Inc., and further alleges:

**JURISDICTIONAL ALLEGATIONS:**

1. The enumerated Plaintiff, Jena Lewis (hereinafter to be referred to as “Ms. Lewis”), at all times material to the instant Complaint, worked in Polk County, Florida. Accordingly, she is *sui juris*.

2. The Defendant, Guest Services Hospitality, Inc., is a Foreign “For Profit” Corporation, duly incorporated under the pertinent laws of the State of Florida with a principal address situated at 3055 Prosperity Avenue, Fairfax, Virginia 22031. The Defendant’s Registered Agent is Business Filing, Inc., with an address at 515 East Park Avenue, Tallahassee, Florida 32301.

3. The Defendant, Guest Hospitality Services, Inc. (hereinafter to be referred to as “GHS”), operates a food preparation facility, cafeteria, and catering services on the campus of Florida Southern College. The Defendant, GSH, has operated said facility

at all times material to the instant Complaint. In light of all of the foregoing, the Defendant is *sui juris*.

4. All conditions precedent to the initiation and/or maintenance of the instant lawsuit have been satisfied and/or, otherwise, waived by the enumerated Defendant.

**GENERAL ALLEGATIONS:**

5. The Plaintiff was previously employed by the Defendant to oversee food preparation and/or cafeteria services offered by the Defendant in the former half of 2014.

6. In connection with the Plaintiff's oversight and concurrent exposure to the facilities operated by the Defendant, as well as the Defendant's food preparation and/or work processes, the Plaintiff had occasion to become well-versed with respect to the Defendant's course of dealing, practice, and/or customs as it relates to the management and/or maintenance of the food preparation facilities in the care and/or control of the Defendant.

7. The Defendant, Guest Services, operates the cafeteria and all catering and food-related facilities at the private college known as Florida Southern College in Polk County, Florida.

8. In addition to the main cafeteria providing meals to faculty and several-thousand students, the Defendant operates several other satellite restaurants and/or dining facilities on the Florida Southern College campus.

9. By virtue of her daily observations and/or exposure to the prevailing conditions on the premises occupied and controlled by the instant Defendant, the Plaintiff, Ms. Lewis, had occasion to become concerned as it related to the negligent

and/or haphazard manner in which the facility was being run.

10. Specifically, the Plaintiff, Ms. Lewis, has observed the presence of myriad feral and large rats habitating in various areas of the cafeteria. Some of the rats have been observed to be dead as a result of the presence of dozens of traps throughout the facility. Notwithstanding the dead rats, the Plaintiff, Ms. Lewis, has personally observed the presence of rat excrement, blood, and urine in locations where they are in close proximity to food as it is being prepared in derogation of the pertinent, applicable health code.

11. In addition to the dead rats, the cafeteria facility is overrun by live rats throughout—the Plaintiff, Ms. Lewis, has personally observed live rats scampering away and/or climbing the cafeteria kitchen’s walls when initially turning on the lights in the morning.

12. Moreover, and significantly more troubling, the Plaintiff, Ms. Lewis, has observed the plastic food packaging for rolls and other bread products to have been “eaten through” during the evenings with bites being taken out of the various bread products.

13. Instead of discarding the aforementioned bread products, the Defendant has taken to “recycling” the foods by utilizing the partially eaten bread for croutons in salads. Quite unbelievably, in recent days, the Defendant has attempted to salvage buns by picking away the portions believed to have been eaten by rats and using the remainder to serve hamburgers to the cafeteria customers.

14. Similar practices of preserving contaminated food have been utilized with respect to flour and sugar products as well. To wit, in the kitchen’s bakery section, sugar

and flour has been observed to have been infiltrated by various bugs and other pests.

15. Despite the clear contamination and health risk, the Defendant has attempted to cut costs by salvaging and/or using the sugar and/or flour in flagrant contravention of the clear health risks associated therewith.

16. In yet another troubling scenario, the accumulation of live maggots behind the cafeteria and in close proximity to food storage areas have been observed and documented.

17. The contaminated food has been served on an ongoing basis to thousands of persons who frequent the cafeteria facilities on the campus of Florida Southern College.

18. The Plaintiff, Ms. Lewis, repeatedly expressed concerns to her immediate supervisor, Mr. Tim Raible, as to the conditions on the premises and the Defendant's failure to abide by pertinent food handling laws, regulations, and/or customs pertaining to established protocols for the handling of foods in contaminated environs.

19. The Plaintiff, Ms. Lewis, was summarily rebuffed by her supervisor, Mr. Tim Raible, and specifically told to "mind her own business".

20. After bringing the matter up on several occasions, the Plaintiff, Ms. Lewis, was terminated by the Defendant based on the purported premise/pretext that she was not a "good fit" for the needs of the company.

21. Based on the all of the foregoing, it is clear that the Plaintiff, Ms. Lewis, was terminated in the Fall of 2014 in retaliation by the Defendant for calling to the Defendant's attention that the Defendant was operating in violation of established law and by virtue of opposing the Defendant's efforts to circumvent the same.

22. Said retaliatory termination was in violation of the Florida Private

Whistleblower's Act (codified as the *Florida Statutes, Chapter 448, et.seq.*)

23. As a direct and/or proximate result of the Defendant's violation of the Florida Private Whistleblower's Act, the Plaintiff has sustained damages. Said injuries are continuing and will not abate in the future.

**COUNT ONE (1)**  
**Violation of the Florida Private Whistleblower Act,**  
**(codified as the Florida Statutes, Chapter 448, et.seq.)**

24. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference Paragraphs One (1) through Twenty-Three (23), as if set forth in their entirety herein.

25. As contemplated and/or provided for in the *Florida Statutes, Chapter 448*, it is illegal for an employer to terminate an employee in retaliation for opposing illegal activities being conducted by the employer.

26. The Plaintiff, Ms. Lewis, as an employee of the Defendant, GSH, repeatedly attempted to bring to the attention the problems and/or hazards present in the cafeteria and catering facilities run by said Defendant.

27. The Plaintiff, Ms. Lewis, for her efforts, was met with hostility, being told to mind her own business.

28. Ultimately, the Defendant elected to terminate the Plaintiff providing as an excuse the ambiguous and wholly pretextual assertion that the Plaintiff was not a good fit for the company.

29. The Plaintiff, Ms. Lewis, was terminated by the Defendant, GSII, for opposing illegal practices being carried out by the Defendant on the premises of Florida Southern College which has the potential to put the health and general well-being of thousand's of individual in jeopardy.

30. The Defendant's act of terminating the Plaintiff in retaliation for opposing the Defendant's illegal practices violated the Florida Private Whistleblower Act.

31. As a direct and/or proximate result of the Defendant's, GSH's, violation of the Private Whistleblower Act, the Plaintiff, Ms. Lewis, has sustained damages. Said injuries are continuing and will not abate in the future.

**WHEREFORE**, the Plaintiff, **JENA LEWIS**, demands judgment against the Defendant, Guest Services Hospitality, Inc., for compensatory damages, future leave to amend for punitive damages, pre-judgment and post-judgment interest, attorney's fees, taxable costs, as well as the provision of any such other relief as this Court should deem equitable and just.

**PLAINTIFF DEMANDS A JURY TRIAL.**

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