



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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California NOW Files Police Complaints Against Hooters for Sexual Entertainment of Minors

On December 16th and 17th in four cities throughout California, members of the California chapter of the National Organization for Women filed complaints against local Hooters establishments for violations of state and local laws covering sexual entertainment and minor children. In San Francisco, Sacramento, Orange County, and San Bruno complaints were filed with police departments and/or district attorney's office urging enforcement of statutes against exposure of minor children to sexual entertainment and prurient material. Chapters of Florida NOW have also committed to filing complaints against Hooters throughout their state.

In the late 90's, Hooters, Inc. told the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that their main function is not providing food, rather their executives characterized Hooter's Restaurants as primarily a provider of, "vicarious sexual entertainment." They have used this designation as a way to avoid compliance with regulations against sexual discrimination in the workplace, yet Hooters also advertises themselves as a family restaurant, and fails to comply with regulations for providers of sexual entertainment.

On a typical evening, Hooters, Inc. serves children younger than 18 years of age and offers child menus, high chairs and booster seats. They also display and sell products of prurient nature, including t-shirts in child sizes with statements such as "Future Hooters

Girl.” According to Hooter’s own employment material, a “Hooters Girl” is employed as a sexual entertainer and as part of her employment can expect to be subjected to various sexual jokes by customers and such potential contacts as buttocks slaps. *Hooters of America Inc. v Phillips*, Case 173 F3d 933 (4/8/99)

"Marketing to young children and advertising as a family restaurant while in reality being nothing but a provider of “vicarious sexual entertainment” amounts to sexual exploitation and attempts to legitimize sex discrimination and hostile work environments for women," says Patty Bellasalma, president of the California chapter of NOW. "Every local county or city with a Hooters should consider a ban on marketing sexual entertainment to minors, and require that sexual entertainment businesses check IDs at the door."

Local and state authorities should demand that Hooters, Inc. either comply with EEOC prohibitions against sexual discrimination, if they wish to be a family restaurant that serves children, or comply with regulations covering providers of sexual entertainment, which prohibit children from the premises. It’s time to end this legal bait and switch.

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Organization files complaint against Hooters chain

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By ABC LOCAL NEWS [Vic Lee](#)

SAN FRANCISCO --

The restaurant chain Hooters is at the center of a new legal fight. The California chapter of the National Organization for Women says it's filing police complaints against Hooters in San Francisco and other California cities.

Mona Lisa Wallace and Tina Gillmor served NOW's complaint to San Bruno police officers. They're charging that Hooters advertises its business as a restaurant rather than as a sex entertainment establishment.

"What concerns us is that children are being served in a sexual establishment business," Wallace said.

Hooters is known as a place where the female wait staff is clad in scanty attire and just the name alone is suggestive. NOW says the restaurant chain is breaking local and state laws admitting children into an adult establishment and add that the merchandise they sell is suggestive as well.

"This [t-shirt] says 'Hooters girl in the making.' So encouraging a child to be a sexual entertainer is prurient and against the law in California," Wallace said.

Hooters did not return ABC7's call to respond to the charges, but lots of people we spoke with defended them.

"It's not like they're showing anything that's not meant to be seen and they have good food, I must tell you," Hooters customer Dean Botelho said.

Nicole Elliott is the mother of two children and she used to be Hooters girl. She says the restaurant is definitely family oriented.

"That was part of our job to help them with the kids' balloons, like I said hula hoops, games," she said.

Not everyone defended Hooters though, as some think the restaurant's theme is degrading.

"I'd never want one of my children to work there. I have two girls, I don't want them to think the environment is OK," parent Mo O'Connell said.

But Christopher Buescher, a parent himself, says he doesn't give a hoot about bringing his boy there.

"I would have to say now that he's stopped breast feeding he might just want to go to Hooters," he said.

NOW Sees Disconnect Between Hooters Legal Defenses and Sales to Minors

Posted Dec 17, 2010 06:06 pm CST

By Debra Cassens Weiss

ABA JOURNAL

The National Organization for Women in California claims Hooters is an adult establishment that shouldn't be allowed to admit minors.

NOW wrote a letter to Orange County officials claiming two local Hooters restaurants are violating state and local laws that regulate sexual entertainment, the Orange County Register reports. The group also filed complaints with police and prosecutors in San Francisco, San Bruno and Sacramento, according to the San Francisco Chronicle.

The president of NOW's San Francisco chapter, Mona Lisa Wallace, told KTVU.com that Hooters claims its workers are adult entertainers when defending its labor practices in lawsuits. If that's true, she said, the restaurant should not be allowed to serve minors.

Wallace said the restaurant has children's menus and displays a pink child's T-shirt that reads "Hooters Girl in the Making."

NOW says at its website the T-shirts are troubling, given Hooters' stance in sexual harassment cases. "According to Hooters' own employment material, a 'Hooters Girl' is employed as a sexual entertainer and as part of her employment can expect to be subjected to various sexual jokes by customers and such potential contacts as buttocks slaps," NOW says.



Learn more about the Civil Rights Act. Title VII prohibits employers from discriminating in employment decisions based on gender, race, national origin, religion or age. Download free flyers at SFNOW.org.

Why have high chairs in a place of sexual entertainment?

In the late 90's, Hooter's Inc. told the EEOC that their main function is not providing food, rather their executives characterized Hooter's Restaurants as primarily a provider of "vicarious sexual entertainment."

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