

Statements of Sarah Shabanowitz and her Counsel

[Ilann M. Maazel](#), Emery Celli Brinckerhoff & Abady

We represent Sarah Shabanowitz. Sarah was a victim of anti-Semitic abuse while working at Mother Earth. Mother Earth's response was a perfect example of how not to respond to a complaint of workplace harassment. They did nothing to keep Sarah safe. They belittled anti-Semitism in the workplace and told Sarah to keep quiet. The problem at Mother Earth is not just the employee; it is management. We will pursue every available remedy in response to Mother Earth's appalling conduct.

If you have information about any anti-Semitic, racial, sexual, or other harassment or misconduct at Mother Earth, please contact Emery Celli paralegal Nathan File at:

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Sarah Shabanowitz

I am an 18-year old college student. In March 2018, I started working in the produce department at the Mother Earth's Storehouse in Kingston, NY. Last week, on March 11, I was in the cooler getting items to stock on the floor. One of my colleagues, Will Sullivan, was standing outside the cooler. He said to me: "now we're going to put you in the gas chamber," and turned off the light. I was horrified. When he saw my look of shock, he said: "yeah, you fucking Jew." I immediately complained to Maryanne, an assistant store manager. Management then spoke with Will, after which he gave me an insincere "sorry" and walked away. I then spoke with my store manager Kristin, who told me that Will and I were expected to continue to work together that day and the following days. She didn't even send Will home early.

The next day, March 12, I told the co-owner of Mother Earth, Chris Schneider, what Will had said, and management's failure to respond or do anything to make me feel safe. Chris told me: "My friends have called me worse."

The next day, March 13, Kristin told me: "You can't work together. I'm going to move you to another department." Kristin also told me to tell nobody what Will had done. Will then found me and started yelling at me for making him look bad. I reported to management that Will was harassing and retaliating against me for making a complaint. I was so upset that I left work early.

March 14 was my day off. On March 15, management called me in for a meeting. Kristin said: "Co-workers are telling me that you told other co-workers Will is an anti-Semite. I'm upset with you." I told Kristin that I was a victim of a hate crime. Kristin said the people commit crimes all

the time in the store. She also said: "You made him out to be the bad guy. He was just making a joke. There have been times when I've said stuff like that." Kristin then moved me from produce to work at the register. I was so upset by everything that happened and asked Kristin if I could leave early. She said: "You either quit your job or do the register. I'm not allowing you to leave early. You're not allowed to talk to anybody. If you tell anybody else about this, I'm going to immediately terminate you." I tried to work at the register but was so upset that I ran to the bathroom in tears. I spoke with my mom and said I can't take it anymore. My mom said, "you need to get out of there," and I did.

My mom then posted a short summary of what happened on Facebook. I heard that, only after word spread about what happened, Mother Earth finally took action and fired Will.

The way Mother Earth treated me was wrong. Not just Will, but management and the ownership. No one did anything to make me safe. No one took this seriously. Instead, management ordered me to keep quiet.

I will not be quiet. No one should be subjected to anti-Semitism or racism or sexism at work.

To this day, Mother Earth has not apologized to me for what happened.