

Fox News Settles with Gretchen Carlson for \$20M



Summary: Fox News has settled Gretchen Carlson's sexual harassment lawsuit against former Fox News CEO Roger Ailes.

Nearly two months ago, former Fox News host Gretchen Carlson shook up the conservative network when she filed a sexual harassment lawsuit against Roger Ailes, the man who had founded and built Fox News into the giant it is today. Now Fox News has settled with Carlson for an astounding \$20 million, Vanity Fair reports.

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In addition to offering money, Fox News issued a public apology to Carlson, which let its viewers know that sexual harassment was not tolerated at the company.

"We sincerely regret and apologize for the fact that Gretchen was not treated with the respect and dignity that she and all of our colleagues deserve," the statement said.

In July, Carlson said that she had been fired because she had complained about how she was treated by her coworker Steve Doocy. In her lawsuit, it stated that Ailes did nothing to stop Doocy's behavior, and that he had told her she was a "man hater" who needed to "get along with the boys." Additionally, Carlson said Ailes made sexist comments and came on to her. He would say things such as, "I think you and I should have had a sexual relationship a long time ago and then you'd be good and better and I'd be good and better."

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After Carlson's allegations, Fox News hired law firm Paul Weiss to conduct a thorough investigation, where numerous female employees seemed to back Carlson's claims. According to Vanity Fair, Fox News has not only settled with Carlson, but with two other women who said that Ailes had sexually harassed them.

Vanity Fair states that as of now, it appears that Fox News will be paying for the actions of Ailes, even though Carlson named him as a defendant in her lawsuit.

"Though Carlson's case is against Ailes personally, Fox is essentially his insurer for any settlement, according to two people familiar with the arrangement, and discussions between Ailes's legal team and 21st Century Fox's legal team became very tense regarding how much Ailes might pay in a settlement. (At press time, it was unclear how much Ailes was personally on the hook for.) As part of the language at the end of the settlement, numerous people with knowledge of the deal told me, Carlson has agreed not to bring any further legal action against other executives at Fox News, or against the company itself," Vanity Fair writes.

Amidst the scandal, Roger Ailes stepped down as chairman and CEO in July, even though he has vehemently denied the charges.

New York writer Gabriel Sherman had chronicled the scandal in detail. On Monday, a spokesperson for the publication told Variety that Ailes' lawyer had contacted them and Sherman, threatening a possible defamation lawsuit. Ailes had hired famed libel attorney Charles Harder, who represented Hulk Hogan in his massive win against Gawker Media and who is now representing Melania Trump against The Daily Mail.

What do you think will happen next to Roger Ailes or Fox News? Let us know in the comments below.

Photo courtesy of Fox News