

Women of Riot Games Reach Historic \$100 Million Pay Equity Settlement

LA-Based Game Developer Agrees to Substantial Systemic Changes

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 27, 2021 – The women of Riot Games announce today a precedent-setting pre-trial equal pay, gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and retaliation class action settlement of \$100 million plus substantial systemic changes that will make the game developer’s workplace more equitable for all current and future female employees and applicants.

“In the battle for equality, announcing one’s truth is the singularity that changes everything,” said class representative Gabriela Downie. “It takes bravery to come forward with a loud message about oppression and pain, but the right people hear it and will help. I’m grateful to the other Riot women who stood up alongside me and to all the Rioters who supported our efforts to achieve equal pay and fair treatment for women.”

Nationally known women’s rights attorney [Genie Harrison](#) of Genie Harrison Law Firm, APC, and co-counsel [Joseph M. Lovretovich](#) and [Nicholas Sarris of JML Law](#), APLC, began representing the private plaintiffs in 2020 after criticism of the prior counsel’s initial settlement. After taking over the case and working together with the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) and the Department of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE), in less than two years a settlement was achieved that is 10 times greater than that to which the gaming company originally agreed.

“This is a great day for the women of Riot Games – and for women at all video game and tech companies – who deserve a workplace that is free of harassment and discrimination,” said Harrison. “We appreciate Riot’s introspection and work since 2018 toward becoming a more diverse and inclusive company, its willingness to take responsibility for its past, and its commitment to fairness and equality in the future. Along with the DFEH and DLSE, the brave women of Riot who carried the torch of justice have achieved a precedent-setting result that stands as a beacon for other women and as a warning that employers had better pay and treat women fairly, or else be held accountable.”

Workplace changes Riot Games agreed to include the following:

- Having a qualified independent third-party expert conduct sex/gender equity analysis of total compensation, assignment, and promotion outcomes for California employees;
- Conducting a hiring process adverse-impact analysis;
- Allowing pay transparency;
- Limiting subjectivity and implicit bias in hiring and selection processes; and
- Providing temporary agency contractor recruitment, selection, and hiring opportunities, policy and procedure improvements, and formal reporting by a qualified Monitor for three years following the settlement, and funding \$6,000,000 per year for these efforts.



The action was originally filed in November 2018, alleging equal pay violations, gender/sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and retaliation on behalf female Riot employees. Previous counsel negotiated a \$10 million settlement and filed a motion for preliminary approval, which the DFEH and DLSE opposed on their belief that the settlement had been rushed and that the violations could amount to additional millions in damages.

"I'm honored to represent the resilient women of Riot Games and to help achieve this precedent-setting settlement on their behalf," said Sarris. "We hope women everywhere take note and demand the fair pay and treatment to which they are entitled under the law," said Lovretovich.

"I am so glad we achieved this first step toward justice for the women of Riot Games," added plaintiff Jes Negron. "I hope this case serves as an example for other studios and an inspiration for women in the industry at large. Women in gaming do not have to suffer inequity and harassment in silence - change is possible."

"I am so proud to have worked alongside the others towards this resolution for the class members of Riot," said plaintiff Gina Cruz Rivera. "To the rest of our industry, keep speaking up and keep pushing for accountability. Your voice matters and together we can make this industry safer and more inclusive for everyone."

In addition to Downie, Negron, and Rivera, other class members who made significant contributions toward the historic result include Jessica Seifert, Antonia Galindo, Irina Crudu and Mayanna Berrin.

The case is *McCracken, et al. v. Riot Games, et al.*, No. 18STCV03957 (LA Superior Ct.).