

Exotic dancer sues Kappa Kabanna over job classification and pay

WGLT | By [Eric Stock](#)

Published August 2, 2022 at 1:44 PM CDT



An exotic dancer has filed a federal lawsuit against the Kappa Kabanna Men's Club over claims the adult entertainment venue misclassifies its dancers so it can pay them less.

Brandi Campbell said in a lawsuit filed in the U.S. District Court Central Illinois District she worked at Kappa Kabanna from October 2021 to February 2022. Campbell said the company classifies its exotic dancers as independent contractors rather than employees. The lawsuit claims the classification is illegal because the dancers' work "is integral to Kappa's business."

Campbell said Kappa Kabanna, located about 15 minutes north of Bloomington-Normal in Kappa, did not pay her minimum wage. She said she was paid only through customer tips and she had to pay a portion of those tips back to the club through a 20% credit card surcharge.

She claims she also was required to share tips with other employees who are not eligible to share in a tip pool, including managers, bouncers and deejays, adding she also had to pay the club about \$17 per shift in “promo fees.”

Campbell has hired a Boston law firm that has sued multiple strip clubs over the use of independent contractors. Attorney Adelaide Pagano with Lichten & Liss-Riordan said these types of cases are widespread in the adult entertainment industry.

Pagano said strip club owners want independent contractors because they aren't eligible for various benefits, including unemployment insurance, workers' compensation and wage and discrimination protections that are afforded to employees.

“There's a real incentive on the part of employers to misclassify workers because they can essentially avoid having to comply with all of these protections that are intended to protect workers,” Pagano said.



Courtesy/Adelaide Pagano

Campbell said she tried to resolve her dispute through arbitration in March, but the case was closed when Kappa Kabanna refused to provide a copy of Campbell's contract to her or the arbitrator.

Pagano said a growing number of strip clubs avoid litigation in these matters by seeking arbitration with the contractors.

“I think the widespread use of these arbitration agreements is really what has cut down a lot on the ability of dancers to bring these cases and win them,” Pagano said.

Campbell wants the court to declare her as an employee and award her back pay for unpaid wages and other damages.

Messages to Kappa Kabanna were not returned.



[Eric Stock](#)

Eric Stock is the News Director at WGLT. You can contact Eric at ejstoc1@ilstu.edu.