

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA	)	IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
	)	THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
COUNTY OF HORRY	)	
	)	Case No:
	)	
KELSEY MANEMEIT,	)	
	)	
Plaintiff,	)	SUMMONS
	)	(JURY TRIAL DEMANDED)
vs.	)	
	)	
HORRY COUNTY, RANDALL	)	
WEBSTER, KRIS LEONHARDT, VAN	)	
SISSELL, BLAKE KLAUDER, AND	)	
BARRY SPIVEY,	)	
	)	
Defendants.	)	
	)	

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and required to answer the Complaint herein, a copy of which is herewith served upon you, and to serve a copy of your answer to this complaint upon the subscriber, at the address shown below, within thirty (30) days after service hereof, exclusive of the day of such service, and if you fail to answer the complaint, judgment by default will be rendered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint.

s/ Tristan Shaffer
Tristan M. Shaffer (SC Bar # 77565)

Jonathan “Jonny” McCoy (SC Bar 77540)

Stuart M. Axelrod (SC Bar # 14678)

AXELROD & ASSOCIATES, PA
4701 Oleander Drive
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
Phone: 843-916-9300
Tristan@gotaxelrod.com

ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF

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BARRY SPIVEY,	)	
	)	
Defendants.	)	
	)	

The Plaintiff, above named, complaining of the Defendants above named, alleges and says the following:

PARTIES AND JURISDICTION

1. This civil action arises from the violation of civil rights, unlawful retaliation, forced resignations, sexual harassment, assault, defamation, violations of privacy, and gross negligence committed by Defendants against Plaintiff Kelsey Manemeit.
2. Plaintiff Kelsey Manemeit is a citizen and resident of Horry County, South Carolina, and at all times relevant to this Complaint served as a police investigator with the Horry County Police Department (HCPD).
3. Defendant Horry County, South Carolina is a politic and corporation of the State of South Carolina, organized and existing under the laws of South Carolina. Throughout this Complaint, Plaintiff will refer to the Defendant Horry County Police Department as "HCPD". HCPD is the law enforcement agency that is a division of Horry County,

4. Defendant Randall Webster is a resident of Horry County. Webster is being sued in his individual capacity. Prior to October 17, 2025, Webster was a Deputy County Administrator in charge of the Public Safety Division for Horry County. At all times relevant to this complaint, Webster was acting under the color of state law and in the course and scope of his employment with Horry County.
5. Defendant Kris Leonhardt is a resident of Horry County and at all times relevant this Complaint was the Chief of Police for the HCPD. Leonhardt is being sued in his individual capacity. At all times relevant to this Complaint, Leonhardt was acting under the color of state law in the course and scope of his employment with HCPD.
6. Horry County has delegated primary policymaking authority for policing of the HCPD to Chief Leonhardt.
7. The decisions of Chief Leonhardt concerning policing at HCPD are not subject to meaningful review.
8. Upon information and belief Blake Klauder is an adult individual who is a resident of Horry County. Klauder is being sued in his individual capacity. During the times referenced in this Complaint, Klauder was a HCPD investigator. At all times relevant to this Complaint, Klauder was acting under color of state law in the course and scope of his employment with HCPD.
9. Upon information and belief, Van Sissell is an adult individual who is a resident of Horry County, South Carolina. Sissell is being sued in his individual capacity. During the times referenced in this Complaint, Van Sissell was a HCPD investigator. At all times relevant to this complaint Sissell was acting under the color of state law and in the course and scope of his employment with HCPD.

10. Upon information and belief, Defendant Barry Spivey is a resident of Horry County and at all times relevant to this Complaint was the County Administrator for Horry County. Spivey is being sued in his individual capacity. At all times relevant to this Complaint, Spivey was acting under the color of state law and in the course and scope of his employment with Horry County.
11. Upon information and belief, Horry County has delegated authority to County Administrator Barry Spivey to make day-to-day hiring and termination decisions for the County.
12. Upon information and belief, Horry County has delegated authority to County Administrator to be the final policymaking authority on statements released on social media and to traditional forms of media.
13. Jurisdiction and venue are proper pursuant to S.C. Code and because all events occurred in Horry County, South Carolina.

FACTS

14. Plaintiff repeats the prior allegations as if stated verbatim herein.
15. At the time of the allegations giving rise to this Complaint, Manemeit was a 30-year-old female.
16. At the time of the allegations giving rise to this Complaint, Defendant Webster was a 61-year-old male.
17. Prior to working for HCPD, Manemeit met Webster because they were neighbors.
18. Prior to working with HCPD, Manemeit worked as a police officer for the City of Conway.
19. In March of 2025, Manemeit separated from her husband, a Horry County Police Officer. Manemeit filed for divorce alleging that her husband cheated on her with another HCPD officer. Manemeit has since had her divorce from her ex-husband finalized.

20. In May of 2025, Manemeit was recruited by Webster to work at a newly created Behavioral Services Department. Manemeit was given a substantial raise to work at the Behavioral Services Department. Manemeit worked with another young female in the Behavioral Services Department.
21. Upon information and belief, Webster recruited Manemeit to work in the Behavioral Services Department due to her physical appearance.
22. Upon information and belief, Webster decided that the ladies of the Behavioral Services Department should be housed in the Randall S. Webster Communications Center¹ rather than in the HCPD offices.
23. Upon information and belief, the decision to house the Behavioral Services Department in the Randall S. Webster Communications Center was an attempt to gain additional access to Manemeit.
24. Over the next several months, Webster began a pattern of unwelcome and inappropriate conduct toward Manemeit.
25. Webster would make inappropriate statements related to Manemeit's appearance.
26. Webster engaged in a pattern of texting Manemeit both during and after work hours. Many of these texts were of an unwanted personal nature.
27. On multiple occasions, Webster told her about dreams he had concerning Manemeit. In one of these dreams, he implied that Manemeit was not fully clothed. Webster indicated that the dream was causing him to lose focus at work.
28. On at least one occasion, Webster asked Manemeit if she had heard rumors that the two were engaged in a sexual relationship. Manemeit responded that she had not and then

¹ After the county learned of the original complaint in this case being filed in this case, the Horry County changed the name of the building to the Horry County Emergency Operations and Communications Center.

indicated that she did not want to blur any lines or jeopardize their professional relationship. Webster continued by saying “Can you give me some sort of a response because I was up all night tossing and turning.”

29. Webster would go out of his way to be alone with Manemeit.
30. Throughout the time they worked together, Webster made sure Manemeit’s work environment was filled with sexual suggestions and innuendos.
31. On multiple occasions, Webster would make unwanted physical contact with Manemeit.
32. Webster would attempt to give Manemeit unwelcome kisses on the cheek.
33. When Webster hugged Manemeit, Manemeit would move her head to the side to avoid Webster attempts to kiss her.
34. Manemeit conveyed to Webster that she did not want to have a romantic relationship with him. Despite this Webster continued his inappropriate behavior toward Manemeit.
35. Others noticed that Webster seemed to be behaving inappropriately with Manemeit.
36. Former Public Information Director, Mikayla Moskov, made multiple statements to superiors at the County concerning Webster’s behavior toward Manemeit and another female employee.
37. County Administrator Barry Spivey was aware of Moskov’s concerns and the inappropriate behavior of Webster.
38. Upon information and belief, County officials were aware of Webster’s inappropriate behavior toward Manemeit by no later than June of 2025.
39. Webster would make a practice of initiating communication with Manemeit after hours
40. Webster would often pull Manemeit away from her other duties just to hear her voice.
41. On or about October 15, 2025, Webster attempted to call Manemeit to tell her goodnight.

42. On October 16, 2025, Manemeit submitted a formal complaint concerning the sexual harassment to Horry County Human Resources (HR).
43. On October 17, 2025, Webster announced he would be retiring effective November 3, 2025.
44. Prior to submitting her HR complaint, Manemeit told her ex-husband, Michael Manemeit (Mike), that she needed to have him watch one of their children so she could go make an HR Complaint against Webster.
45. During this time Mike and Manemeit were waiting to finalize their divorce and had been living separate and apart pursuant to a Family Court order.
46. Mike was publicly dating and engaging in a sexual relationship with the daughter of a former deputy chief of the HCPD.
47. Additionally, Mike had already been engaging in a sexual relationship with two other women while still married. One of these women was a HCPD officer.
48. Manemeit too had moved on from her marriage with Mike, in the fall of 2025 Manemeit began seeing Torry Lewis (Lewis). During this time Torry Lewis was working with the HCPD SWAT team.
49. The weekend after filing the HR Complaint, Manemeit admitted to Mike that she had been dating another officer.
50. Upon information and belief, someone in Horry County informed Mike that it was a SWAT team officer.
51. On October 19, 2025, Mike sent out a text message to the HCPD SWAT team asking who was dating Manemeit.

52. Lewis spoke with Mike after the text, informing him that he was seeing Manemeit, Mike expressed that he would have appreciated if Lewis spoke with Mike prior to it. Ultimately, Mike and Lewis were cordial.
53. On Monday, October 20, 2025, Lewis spoke with SWAT Captain Ard and Deputy Chief Mick Kathman, to let them know about his relationship with Manemeit.
54. On Tuesday, October 21, 2025, Lewis was able to speak to Chief Leonhardt and explained that he was having a relationship with Manemeit. Lewis told Leonhardt that he did not feel he was doing anything wrong because they were legally separated and Mike had been dating another woman. Leonhardt acknowledged that he already was aware that Mike had been dating the daughter of the former HCPD deputy chief.
55. During the October 21, 2025, meeting with Leonhardt, Lewis also brought up the HR Complaint against Webster. Lewis indicated that he did not want his and Manemeit's relationship to be affected by any political fallout from the HR Complaint.
56. During the October 21, 2025, meeting with Lewis, Leonhardt indicated that Lewis and Manemeit's relationship was a personal matter and everyone would need to act professionally, but that HCPD could work around it.
57. After meeting with Leonhardt, Lewis spoke to Manemeit concerning the meeting. Lewis encouraged Manemeit to have a face-to-face meeting with Leonhardt to explain why she filed a HR complaint against Webster.
58. Manemeit requested a meeting as a courtesy to Leonhardt to explain to him why she filed an HR Complaint against Webster. So, Manemeit met with Leonhardt.
59. Leonhardt again acknowledged that Manemeit's relationship with Torry was a personal matter and that they would work around it. Leonhardt conveyed that the relationship would not be a problem for her career, and they would find a way to work around it.

60. On Tuesday October 21, 2025, at 10:27 a.m., Leonhardt texted Barry Spivey and arranged a meeting for the following day.
61. On Wednesday October 22, 2025, David Jordan was appointed Interim Deputy County Administrator to replace Webster.
62. For a time period starting on October 22, 2025, and ending no sooner than December 15, 2025, David Jordan was operating in a dual role as both County Attorney and Interim Deputy County Administrator.
63. Upon information and belief, rumors that Webster allegedly sexually harassed a county employee made it to the media during the work week between October 20, 2025 and October 24, 2025.
64. Members of the media began to reach out to Moskov in her role as Director of Public Information. They questioned whether Webster had sexually harassed or assaulted another employee. Moskov told reporters that she would ask about it.
65. Moskov reached out to Interim Deputy County Administrator, David Jordan, about the rumors surrounding Webster's retirement. He informed her that Webster's retirement was amicable.
66. Moskov also reached out to County Administrator Barry Spivey, about the rumors surrounding Webster's retirement who also informed her that they were not true.
67. Upon information and belief, Barry Spivey and David Jordan were attempting to prevent the media from finding out why Webster retired suddenly.
68. For several months prior to the Webster Complaint, the media had been looking into anyone leaving the HCPD due to inquiries related to the Scott Spivey case.
69. After Webster's announced retirement, the media also began submitting Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests for documents related to Webster's abrupt retirement.

70. South Carolina law requires that a government agency respond to a FOIA request within 10 days. If documents are to be produced pursuant to the FOIA request, the documents must be produced within 30 days of the response. Therefore, the County was on a timetable to address the public relations problem associated with Webster's behavior.
71. Upon information and belief, given Moskov's prior criticism of Webster's behavior, County leadership decided that she would not be the best person to address the media's inquiries.
72. Upon information and belief, on or about Wednesday October 22, 2025, Chief Leonhardt, Barry Spivey, and others in County leadership met to discuss a plan to minimize the negative press associated with Randy Webster's retirement.
73. Upon information and belief, when complaints are made by officers that reflect poorly on Horry County, members of the HCPD command respond by trying to find dirt on the complaining officer.
74. Upon information and belief, between October 22, 2025 and October 27, 2025, motivated in part by retaliation, Leonhardt and Spivey formulated a plan to whitewash Webster's behavior by discrediting Manemeit.
75. On October 27, 2025, Chief Leonhardt asked the HCPD's Office of Professional Standards (OPS) to open an OPS investigation on Manemeit concerning her relationship with Torry Lewis. Blake Klauder (Klauder) and Van Sissell (Sissell) of OPS were assigned to this task.
76. On October 27, 2025 at 1:48 pm, Leonhardt sent the following text to Barry Spivey: "Taken care of thanks".

77. At the time the OPS investigation into Manemeit was initiated, there was a HCPD policy concerning Fraternization that had been in effect since November 15, 2019. This policy stated the following:
- “The Chief of Police recognizes the rights of a member to become involved in a personal relationship with another department member and that such personal relationships may be consensual, private, and a matter of personal choice.”
78. The 2019 policy defined “Personal Relationships” as “a romantic relationship between members who date or cohabitate, or a relationship between members who engage in sexual activity; one with the other.”
79. Manemeit and Lewis’s relationship did not violate the policy in place at the time of the investigation.
80. After Kelsey Manemeit’s initial interview with OPS, Leonhardt, on November 1, 2025, ordered that the 2019 policy be changed to eliminate the right of department members to engage in personal relationships with each other and to allow the Department to investigate “perceived” conflicts of interest from romantic relationships.
81. Despite the changes to the Policy, Manemeit’s relationship with Lewis did not violate the November 1, 2025 policy.
82. The stated purpose of the investigation was for an “alleged relationship” between Manemeit and Lewis. However, this “alleged relationship” did not need to be investigated because it had been admitted by both parties the week prior to the investigation.
83. Klauder and Sissell’s investigation involved prying into Manemeit’s private and personal life, both before and after the November 1, 2025 policy change.
84. Klauder and Sissell’s investigation treated Manemeit different than Lewis. Lewis was a male.

85. The Klauder and Sissell's questions to Lewis were designed to illicit negative information against Manemeit.
86. Klauder and Sissell's questioning toward Manemeit created a hostile work environment.
87. The OPS investigation uncovered allegations that Mike previously had an affair with another police officer. However, upon information and belief, HCPD failed to take any action against Mike.
88. Upon information and belief, Manemeit was treated differently than Mike who was later given a preferential assignment with HCPD instead of being forced to resign as Manemeit was on November 6, 2025.
89. OPS Investigators demanded that Manemeit provide information concerning her private sex life.
90. Upon information and belief, the OPS investigation was based in part on a desire to retaliate against Manemeit for voicing her concerns about Webster.
91. Upon information and belief, the OPS investigation was based in part on a desire to whitewash the allegations against Webster by discrediting Manemeit.
92. Manemeit attempted to inform Horry County HR that she was being retaliated against. However, HR said that it was a police matter and there was nothing they could do.
93. During the course of the investigation concerning Manemeit, OPS learned that Manemeit also had consensual off-duty sexual interactions with Don Kobithen.
94. During the investigation concerning Manemeit, OPS also learned that Lewis had previously had a consensual off-duty encounter with Mikayla Moskov.
95. During the course of the investigation concerning Manemeit, OPS also learned that Lewis had previously had a consensual sexual encounter with HCPD officer Misty Gore.
96. Upon information and belief, Leonhardt was keeping up with the investigation.

97. Upon information and belief, there were rumors that Gore had a consensual sexual relationship with a high-ranking HCPD officer who was close with Leonhardt during this time.
98. Upon information and belief, OPS stopped attempting to find other officers who had had off-duty sexual encounters with each other.
99. On November 1, 2025, Webster sent Leonhardt a text which stated the following:
- Hey so hope you are doing well!!! Hard to believe it has been two weeks since leaving, but it does feel good. If you are willing, I would like to go to lunch or just meet soon and fill you in on several things before it all goes too far along. I am fine if you include Justin.
100. Upon information and belief, Justin in the text message means Deputy Chief Justin Wyatt.
101. Upon information and belief, Webster was trying to discuss the Manemeit and the fallout from his resignation.
102. Upon information and belief, Leonhardt discussed this matter with Webster sometime between November 1, 2025 and November 5, 2025.
103. In the past when HCPD officers engaged in either on-duty sexual encounters or off-duty sexual encounters that affected work, the general response was suspension or reassignment, rather than termination.
104. Upon information and belief, Leonhardt initially planned on merely suspending and/or reassigning Lewis, Gore, and Kobithen.
105. Upon information and belief, between November 3, 2025 and November 6, 2025, Leonhardt was called to a meeting with county leadership including Interim Deputy County Administrator David Jordan and County Administrator Barry Spivey concerning Manemeit.
106. Upon information and belief, during the meeting that occurred between November 3, 2025 and November 6, 2025, between Leonhardt, Jordan and Spivey, Jordan was acting

primarily in his capacity as Interim Deputy County Administrator over the Public Safety Division.

107. Upon information and belief, between November 3, 2025 and November 6, 2025, County Administrator Barry Spivey and Leonhardt agreed that Manemiet must be terminated.
108. Upon information and belief, between November 3, 2025 and November 6, 2025, County Administrator Barry Spivey and Leonhardt agreed that Lewis, Kobithen and Gore should be terminated.
109. Upon information and belief, between November 3, 2025 and November 6, 2025, County Administrator Barry Spivey told Leonhardt that Moskov would also be terminated.
110. Upon information and belief, after the decision had already been made to terminate Manemeit, OPS submitted a report to Chief Leonhardt concerning the investigation on November 6, 2025.
111. The OPS Investigation Report contained private information concerning the off-duty lives of Manemeit. The OPS Investigation report also contains private information concerning the off-duty lives of officers Torry Lewis, Donald Kobithen and Misty Gore.
112. Upon information and belief, the OPS report was a formality and the decision to terminate Manemeit, Lewis, Kobithen and Gore had already been made.
113. On November 6, 2025, Manemeit was told to meet with Leonhardt and Interim Deputy County Administrator David Jordan. During this meeting, Manemeit was given a choice to either resign or be terminated. Deputy Chief Wyatt, Deputy Chief Kathmann, Deputy Chief Winburn were also present when Manemeit was terminated.
114. To minimize the stigma associated with the retaliation from Defendants, Manemeit chose to take the forced resignation option provided.
115. Moskov, Lewis, Kobithen and Gore were also forced to resign on November 6, 2025.

116. Upon information and belief, the forced resignation of Manemeit was based on retaliation for voicing concerns about Webster's inappropriate behavior.
117. Upon information and belief, Officers Torry Lewis, Donald Kobithen and Misty Gore were collateral damage of the improper OPS investigation.
118. The OPS report was sent to the SC Criminal Justice Academy.
119. Upon information and belief, the SC Criminal Justice Academy found that the facts contained in the OPS report do not amount to misconduct.
120. On November 7, 2025, Leonhardt released the OPS report to the media which contained private information concerning Manemeit's off-duty sexual life.
121. On November 7, 2025, HCPD released a statement on Facebook indicating that Manemeit violated the code of conduct "stemming from internal, personnel matters."
122. Upon information and belief, Leonhardt and Spivey authorized this Facebook statement.
123. Upon information and belief, the Facebook statement is false.
124. On or about November 10, 2025, Leonhardt voluntarily gave an interview to Adrianna Lawrence with WBTW concerning the termination of Manemeit.
125. Upon information and belief, Leonhardt provided false and/or misleading statements during this interview. Leonhardt's false and/or misleading statements included the following:
 - a. Leonhardt denied knowing that Manemeit had filed a Sexual Harassment Complaint against Webster;
 - b. Leonhardt claimed that off-duty sexual relationships between officers were against policy;
 - c. Leonhardt called Manemeit untrustworthy based on the incident;
 - d. Leonhardt falsely claimed to WBTW that Manemeit had violated HCPD policy;

- e. Leonhardt falsely claimed to WBTW that Manemeit created an unharmonious work environment;
 - f. Leonhardt falsely claimed to WBTW that the OPS originated because of a text message that had been turned over to him; and
 - g. Leonhardt falsely gave the impression that Manemeit's relationship with Lewis was illicit by intentionally failing to provide the proper facts and circumstances concerning the incident.
126. Upon information and belief, Leonhardt made these false and/or misleading statements knowing that WBTW would likely distribute them to the general public.
127. Upon information and belief, if believed, the false statements made by Leonhardt carry with them a stigma that negatively affect Manemeit's future employability.
128. Manemeit had suffered damages as a result of the actions of Defendants.

EXHAUSTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES

129. The foregoing paragraphs are referred to and incorporated as if set forth verbatim herein.
130. Plaintiff timely filed formal charges with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).
131. On May 1, 2026, the EEOC issued a Notice of Right to Sue from the EEOC.
132. Plaintiff has exhausted administrative remedies for the Title VII claims and South Carolina Human Affair Law Claims.
133. Plaintiff has filed this action within the applicable statute of limitations.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION **(Sexual Harassment and Sexual Discrimination)** **(Fourteenth Amendment Equal Protection Claim Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983)** **(As to Defendant Webster)**

134. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated by reference as if set forth verbatim herein.

135. The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment confers the right of individuals to be free from gender-based discrimination.
136. Intentional sexual harassment by a government employee violates the Fourteenth Amendment.
137. The constitutional right of a female government employee to be free from sex-based discrimination by the way of sexual harassment is clearly established.
138. Webster intentionally engaged in a pattern of sexual harassment against Manemeit
139. Webster's sexual harassment of Manemeit was based on her status as a female.
140. Webster's pattern of unwelcome sexual conduct toward Manemeit, described in the particulars above, was sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of Manemeit's employment and to create a hostile and abusive work environment.
141. While acting as Deputy County Administrator, Webster violated Manemeit's Fourteenth Amendment Equal Protection rights by way of engaging in the following particulars:
 - a. Webster's assault and battery on Manemeit when he would touch her without her consent;
 - b. Webster's unwelcomed sexual advances toward Manemeit;
 - c. Webster kissing Manemeit without her consent;
 - d. Webster hugging Manemeit without her consent;
 - e. Webster's lying to Manemeit about a fabricated out-of-town meeting so he could be alone with Manemeit;
 - f. Webster's unsolicited inappropriate communication with Manemeit;
 - g. Webster's inappropriate comments concerning Manemeit's appearance;
 - h. Webster's discussions concerning his dream about Manemeit;

- i. Webster's attempts to woo Manemeit by making her feel indebted to him based on arrangements concerning her dog; and
 - j. Such other particulars as the evidence at trial will show.
142. The particulars in the preceding paragraph were done while Webster was acting under the color of state law and within the course and scope of his employment.
143. Manemeit was harmed by Webster's violation of her Fourteenth Amendment rights.
144. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, Manemeit is entitled to an award for compensatory damages and punitive damages against Webster for the violation of her Fourteenth Amendment right to equal protection.
145. Manemeit demands a trial by jury for this cause of action.
146. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1988, Manemeit is also entitled to an award of attorney's fees for this cause of action.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION
(Sexual Harassment and Discrimination)
(Fourteenth Amendment Equal Protection Clause Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983)
(As to Defendants Klauder and Sissell)

147. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated by reference as if set forth verbatim herein.
148. The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment confers the right of individuals to be free from gender-based discrimination. This right has been clearly defined by the United States Supreme Court.
149. Although the sexual harassment of Manemeit started with Webster, it was continued by Klauder and Sissell after, and partially in response to Manemeit's HR Complaint against Webster.
150. Klauder and Sissell discriminated against Manemeit by prying into her off-duty personal life and demanding to know everyone employed at Horry County that she had sex with.

151. Klauder and Sissell's questioning was not limited to Manemeit's already admitted relationship with Lewis.
152. Klauder and Sissell demanded to know details about Manemeit's off-duty sex life.
153. Klauder and Sissell demanded to know details about Manemeit's divorce.
154. Klauder and Sissell demanded to see documents from Manemeit's divorce.
155. Although this harassment was in part motivated by retaliation, the acts of Klauder and Sissell were independent acts of sexual harassment and sex-based discrimination that violated Plaintiff's Fourteenth Amendment right to equal protection.
156. Klauder and Sissell completed these independent acts of sexual harassment and sex-based discrimination under the color of state law.
157. Klauder and Sissell's conduct toward Manemeit, including their demands that she disclose details of her off-duty sex life and divorce, was sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of Manemeit's employment and to create a hostile and abusive work environment, and is imputable to Horry County because it was carried out by Klauder and Sissell in their official roles as OPS investigators at the direction of Leonhardt.
158. Plaintiff was damaged by Klauder and Sissell's acts of sexual harassment and sex-based discrimination.
159. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, Manemeit is entitled to an award for compensatory damages and punitive damages against Klauder and Sissell for the violation of her Fourteenth Amendment right to equal protection.
160. Manemeit demands a trial by jury for this cause of action.
161. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1988, Manemeit is also entitled to an award of attorney's fees for this cause of action.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION
(Conspiracy to Violate the Fourteenth Amendment Equal Protection Clause)
(Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1985)
(As to Defendants Klauder, Sissell, Leonhardt, and Spivey)

162. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated by reference as if set forth verbatim herein.
163. Leonhardt and Spivey agreed to institute an OPS investigation of Manemeit, in part, based upon the HR complaint that Manemeit filed against Webster.
164. Leonhardt and Spivey agreed to institute this OPS investigation, knowing that it was harassing in nature.
165. Leonhardt and Spivey agreed to institute this OPS investigation under color of state law while acting in the course and scope of their employment at Horry County.
166. The harassing nature of the OPS investigation was a form of sexual harassment and sex-based discrimination.
167. Leonhardt, Spivey, Klauder, and Sissell shared a common understanding and agreement, motivated by discriminatory animus toward Manemeit, to subject her to the sex-based discrimination and harassment during the OPS investigation described above.
168. The OPS investigation violated Manemeit's 14th Amendment right to equal protection under the law.
169. Upon information and belief, Leonhardt and Spivey's agreement to institute the OPS investigation is evidenced by a text message stating "[t]aken care of thanks" on the day Leonhardt requested the OPS investigation.
170. Leonhardt and Spivey's agreement to institute the OPS investigation was a conspiracy to violate Manemeit's 14th Amendment right to equal protection under the law.
171. Klauder and Sissell joined Leonhardt and Spivey's conspiracy to violate Manemeit's 14th Amendment rights by engaging in the OPS investigation.

172. The conspiracy to violate Manemeit's 14th Amendment rights was accompanied by an overt act when Klauder and Sissell pried into Manemeit's personal life during the course of the OPS investigation
173. Leonhardt and Spivey further pursued the conspiracy to violate Manemeit's 14th Amendment rights when they decided to terminate her.
174. Manemeit was injured as a result of the actions of these defendants, which conspired to violate her 14th Amendment right to equal protection.
175. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1985, Manemeit is entitled to an award for compensatory damages and punitive damages against Spivey, Leonhardt, Klauder, and Sissell for the conspiracy to violate of her Fourteenth Amendment right to equal protection.
176. Manemeit demands a trial by jury for this cause of action.
177. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1988, Manemeit is also entitled to an award of attorney's fees for this cause of action.

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION
(Free Speech as to Defendants Leonhardt and Spivey)
(First Amendment to 42 U.S.C. § 1983)

178. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated by reference as if set forth verbatim herein.
179. On October 16, 2025, Manemeit filed a formal complaint with Human Resources (HR) concerning Webster's behavior. This HR complaint addressed the sexually harassing behavior of Webster. During this process of filing this HR complaint, Plaintiff also made statements concerning matters of public concern. These statements were constitutionally protected speech.
180. As a result of the HR complaint, Defendant Leonhardt ordered the OPS investigation against Manemeit.

181. Upon information and belief Defendant Leonhardt operated with the guidance and assistance of Defendant Spivey in opening the OPS investigation to retaliate against the Manemeit for her statements to HR.
182. After the OPS investigation started, Manemeit again complained to HR that the OPS investigation itself was retaliation for the first HR Complaint. This statement to HR was also constitutionally protected speech. The criticism of retaliation was a matter of public concern.
183. Manemeit's interest in speaking to HR about Webster's conduct and about the retaliatory OPS investigation outweighed any interest Horry County had in providing effective and efficient services to the public, particularly because Manemeit's statements were made through internal HR channels, did not disrupt HCPD operations, and concerned a matter of public trust and misconduct within law enforcement leadership.
184. HR refused to listen to her concern.
185. Upon information and belief, Spivey and Leonhardt decided to terminate Manemeit based upon her statements to HR.
186. Spivey and Leonhardt's decision to terminate Manemeit was done under the color of state law in the course of their employment with Horry County.
187. Spivey and Leonhardt's decision to terminate Manemeit violated her rights under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.
188. Manemeit suffered damages based upon her termination.
189. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, Manemeit is entitled to an award for compensatory and punitive damages for the violation of her First Amendment right to free speech.
190. Manemeit demands a trial by jury for this cause of action.

191. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1988, Manemeit is also entitled to an award of attorney's fees for this cause of action.

FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION
(Conspiracy to violate Plaintiff's First Amendment Right to Free Speech)
(Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1985)
(As to Defendants Klauder, Sissell, Leonhardt, and Spivey)

192. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated by reference as if set forth verbatim herein.
193. Plaintiff had a First Amendment right to be free from retaliation based on her decision to exercise free speech.
194. Leonhardt and Spivey agreed to institute an OPS investigation of Manemeit, in part, to punish her for exercising her right to free speech by speaking to HR.
195. Leonhardt and Spivey agreed to institute this OPS investigation under color of state law while acting in the course and scope of their employment at Horry County.
196. The OPS investigation violated Manemeit's First Amendment right to free speech.
197. Upon information and belief, Leonhardt and Spivey's agreement to institute the OPS investigation is evidenced by a text message stating "[t]aken care of thanks" on the day Leonhardt requested the OPS investigation.
198. Leonhardt and Spivey's agreement to institute the OPS investigation was a conspiracy to violate Manemeit's First Amendment right to free speech.
199. Klauder and Sissell joined Leonhardt and Spivey's conspiracy to violate Manemeit's First Amendment rights by engaging in the OPS investigation.
200. The conspiracy to violate Manemeit's First Amendment rights was accompanied by an overt act when Klauder and Sissell questioned Manemeit's personal life during the course of the OPS investigation.
201. Leonhardt and Spivey further pursued the conspiracy to violate Manemeit's First Amendment rights when they terminated her.

202. Manemeit was injured as a result of the actions of these defendants, which conspired to violate her First Amendment right to free speech.
203. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1985, Manemeit is entitled to an award for compensatory damages and punitive damages against Spivey, Leonhardt, Klauder, and Sissell for the conspiracy to violate of her First Amendment right to free speech.
204. Manemeit demands a trial by jury for this cause of action.
205. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1988, Manemeit is also entitled to an award of attorney's fees for this cause of action.

SIXTH CAUSE OF ACTION
(Monell Claim First Amendment Free Speech)
(As to Defendant Horry County)

206. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated by reference as if set forth verbatim herein.
207. Leonhardt is the final decision-making authority for the police policy in the HCPD.
208. For day-to-day decisions, Spivey is the final decision-making authority for Horry County.
209. Through Spivey and Leonhardt, Horry County adopted a policy of suppressing Manemeit's First Amendment right to free speech based upon her statements to HR.
210. Upon information and belief, Horry County's practice and custom of investigating and discrediting officers who make complaints that reflect poorly on the County, as described above, demonstrates a widespread custom or practice of retaliating against employees who exercise their First Amendment rights, separate and apart from any single decision related directly to Plaintiff.
211. Manemeit's First Amendment right to free speech was violated by the retaliation and termination which was previously stated.
212. Manemeit's First Amendment right to free speech was violated based on Horry County policies and customs created by Spivey and Leonhardt.

213. Horry County showed deliberate indifference to Manemeit's First Amendment rights when they opened an OPS investigation against her in retaliation for her statements to HR.
214. Horry County showed deliberate indifference to Manemeit's First Amendment rights when HR refused to assist her in her concerns about retaliation over the first HR Complaint.
215. Horry County showed deliberate indifference to Manemeit's First Amendment rights when they intentionally decided to terminate her based on her statements to HR.
216. The policy instituted by Spivey and Leonhardt to violate Plaintiff's First Amendment rights led to the damages that Plaintiff has suffered.
217. Due in part to the fact that Spivey and Leonhardt were the ultimate policy makers concerning the County and their police force, the policy is fairly attributable to Horry County.
218. Pursuant to *Monell v. Dep't of Soc. Servs. of City of New York*, 436 U.S. 658, 98 S. Ct. 2018 (1978), Manemeit is entitled to an award for compensatory damages and punitive damages against Horry County for the violation of her First Amendment right to Free Speech.
219. Manemeit demands a jury trial for this cause of action.
220. Manemeit is also entitled to an award of attorney's fees for this cause of action.

SEVENTH CAUSE OF ACTION

**(Stigma Plus Fourteenth Amendment Claim Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983)
(As to Defendant Leonhardt)**

221. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated by reference as if set forth verbatim herein.
222. The United States Supreme Court has recognized a clearly defined 14th Amendment liberty interest to be free from stigmatizing false statements accompanied by acts which negatively impact a public employee's ability to engage in a career.
223. Plaintiff was stigmatized when Leonhardt gave false and misleading statements concerning Manemeit in conjunction with Manemeit's forced resignation.

224. On November 7, 2025, Leonhardt released a statement to the media falsely claiming that Manemeit violated HCPD policy and created an unharmonious work environment.
225. On November 10, 2025, Leonhardt provided false and misleading statements to WBTW. These statements to WBTW gave a false impression about the circumstances surrounding Manemeit's termination. Some of the false and stigmatizing statements made by Leonhardt concerning WBTW are noted above.
226. Plaintiff was also stigmatized when Leonhardt submitted false information to the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy claiming that Manemeit had violated HCPD policy.
227. Leonhardt's false and misleading statements placed a stigma on Manemeit's reputation.
228. Plaintiff was not given notice that Leonhardt was planning on making these statements nor given an opportunity to clear her name.
229. Leonhardt's statements that Manemeit was "untrustworthy," had violated policy, had created an "unharmonious work environment," and had engaged in an "illicit" relationship, described above, were statements that called into question Manemeit's honesty and integrity and implied serious character defects, rather than mere allegations of incompetence, and therefore constitutes a constitutionally cognizable stigma.
230. Leonhardt's false and misleading statements were so widely publicized that Manemeit will forever be stigmatized by them.
231. Leonhardt's false and misleading statements have negatively impacted Plaintiff's ability to get hired for another job in law enforcement.
232. Leonhardt made these false and misleading statements under the color of state law while acting in the course and scope of his employment with Horry County.
233. Leonhardt's false and misleading statements were defamatory in nature.

234. Leonhardt's false and misleading statements, coupled with Manemeit's forced termination, deprived Manemeit of her Fourteenth Amendment liberty interest.
235. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, Manemeit is entitled to an award for compensatory damages and punitive damages against Leonhardt for the deprivation of her liberty interest.
236. Manemeit demands a trial by jury for this cause of action.
237. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1988, Manemeit is also entitled to an award of attorney's fees for this cause of action.

EIGHTH CAUSE OF ACTION
(Sexual Harassment and Sexual Discrimination)
(Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)
(As to Defendant Horry County)

238. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated by reference as if set forth verbatim herein.
239. While employed by Horry County, Webster engaged in sex-based discrimination by creating a hostile work environment against Manemeit by sexually harassing her.
240. Webster engaged in this sex-based discrimination both during work hours and after hours.
241. Webster engaged in a pattern of making unwelcome sexual advances toward Manemeit.
242. Webster would touch Manemeit and attempt to kiss her.
243. Webster would discuss topics of a personal nature in to entice Manemeit into engaging in a sexual relationship with him.
244. Webster made attempts to be alone with Manemeit. On one such occasion, Webster fabricated an out-of-town appointment as a rouse to justify spending time with Manemeit.
245. Webster would insist on Manemeit appearing in pictures with him based on her appearance.
246. Upon information and belief, Horry County administration knew about Webster's inappropriate behavior prior to Manemeit's HR complaint.
247. The actions of Webster against Manemeit constitute a pattern of behavior of sexual discrimination in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

248. Manemeit is, and was at all relevant times, a member of a class protected by Title VII in that she is female.
249. Webster's pattern of sexual harassment toward Manemeit was continuous during her employment with Horry County.
250. Upon information and belief, Webster's pattern of sexual discrimination continued when he attempted to guide Manemeit's punishment in early November of 2025.
251. Horry County failed to take sufficient steps to protect Manemeit from the pattern of sexual harassment and discrimination at the hands of Webster.
252. Webster's inappropriate behavior was sufficiently severe to alter the conditions of Plaintiff's employment and create a hostile work environment.
253. Additionally, once Webster retired, the County continued to sexually discriminate against Manemeit.
254. The OPS investigation inappropriately pried into Manemeit's private sexual life.
255. HCPD and County leadership treated Manemeit different than a similarly situated male employee.
256. The County and HCPD claimed to terminate Manemeit for her sexual relationship with Lewis and Kobithen prior to her divorce from Mike.
257. Horry County was aware that Mike had engaged in an extramarital sexual relationship. However, Mike, a male, faced no punishment and was even given a preferential assignment after Manemeit was terminated.
258. This constitutes a pattern of sexual discrimination that continued until her termination on November 6, 2025.
259. These conditions involving the OPS investigation were sufficiently severe to alter the conditions of Plaintiff's employment and to create a hostile work environment.

260. The actions of the OPS investigation violated 42 USC § 2000e-2.
261. As a proximate cause of the discriminatory behavior by Defendants, Plaintiff incurred damages including, mental anguish, lost wages, and attorney's fees.
262. Horry County is liable to Plaintiff for damages in an amount to be determined by a jury for this cause of action.
263. Plaintiff demands a jury trial as to this cause of action.

NINTH CAUSE OF ACTION
(Sexual Harassment and Sexual Discrimination)
(South Carolina Human Affairs Law)
(As to Defendant Horry County)

264. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated by reference as if set forth verbatim herein.
265. As referenced above, Webster's pattern of sexual harassment and sex-based discrimination violated the South Carolina Human Affairs Law. Specifically, Webster's behavior toward Manemeit violated the South Carolina Human Affairs Law. *See* S.C. Code § 1-13-10, *et seq.*
266. Horry County is liable for the actions of Webster that violate South Carolina Human Affairs Law.
267. Additionally, as referenced above, Horry County engaged in sexual harassment and sex-based discrimination against Manemiet during the OPS investigation. The actions during the OPS investigation violated the South Carolina Human Affairs Law. *See* S.C. Code § 1-13-10, *et seq.*
268. Based on the violation of the South Carolina Human Affairs Law, Plaintiff seeks a judgment for compensatory damages against Defendant Horry County for this cause of action. Plaintiff also seeks any and all other equitable and legal remedies available under the South Carolina Human Affairs Law.
269. Plaintiff demands a jury trial as to this cause of action.

TENTH CAUSE OF ACTION
(Retaliation Under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)
(As to Defendant Horry County)

270. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated by reference as if set forth verbatim herein.
271. On October 16, 2025, Manemeit filed a HR complaint about the Webster's sexual harassment and sex-based discrimination.
272. Webster's behavior that Manemeit complained to HR about violated 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2.
273. In response to her speaking out against sexual harassment, Horry County, sought to retaliate against Manemeit.
274. Horry County leadership sought to punish and discredit Manemeit for filing the HR Complaint.
275. Despite the fact that Manemeit's relationship with Lewis was allowed under HCPD's 2019 fraternization policy, Horry County used this relationship as a pretext to open up an OPS investigation against Manemeit in an attempt to punish and discredit her for filing the HR complaint against Webster.
276. The OPS investigation dug into Manemeit's personal life and caused embarrassment and mental anguish.
277. Horry County further retaliated against Manemeit for filing an HR complaint, by forcing her resignation.
278. Horry County's actions in retaliation to Manemeit's HR complaint against Webster violated 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-3(a).
279. As a proximate cause of the retaliation by Horry County, Plaintiff incurred damages including, mental anguish, lost wages, and attorney's fees.
280. Horry County is liable to Plaintiff for damages in an amount to be determined by a jury for this cause of action.

281. Plaintiff demands a jury trial as to this cause of action.

ELEVENTH CAUSE OF ACTION
(Retaliation Under the South Carolina Human Affairs Law)
(As to Defendant Horry County)

282. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated by reference as if set forth verbatim herein.

283. As referenced above, retaliation of Horry County violated the South Carolina Human Affairs Law. *See* S.C. Code § 1-13-10, *et seq.*

284. Based on the violation of the South Carolina Human Affairs Law, Plaintiff seeks a judgment for compensatory damages against Defendant Horry County for this cause of action. Plaintiff also seeks any and all other equitable and legal remedies available under the South Carolina Human Affairs Law.

285. Plaintiff demands a jury trial as to this cause of action.

TWELFTH CAUSE OF ACTION
(Invasion of Privacy)
(As to Defendant Horry County)

286. The foregoing paragraphs are referred to and incorporated as if set forth verbatim herein.

287. Defendant Horry County publicly released sensitive material concerning Plaintiff's personal life without her consent.

288. This information was not subject to disclosure pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

289. Defendant Horry County knew or should have known that this information was both private in nature and sensitive in nature.

290. Defendant Horry County by and through their employee Leonhardt, violated Plaintiff's right to privacy by releasing the OPS Report.

291. The private information concerning Manemeit's off-duty personal life that was contained in the OPS Report and released to the media, including information about her sexual

relationships and her divorce, would be highly offensive to a reasonable person, and its disclosure was not of legitimate public concern.

292. During the November 10, 2025 WBTW interview of Leonhardt, Defendant Horry County made additional statements to the media concerning Plaintiff, that violated her right to privacy.
293. The release of this information has harmed Plaintiff.
294. The Plaintiff is informed and believes that she is entitled to a judgment against Defendant Horry County for violation of Plaintiff's right to privacy.
295. Plaintiff demands a jury trial as to this cause of action.

THIRTEENTH CAUSE OF ACTION
(Gross Negligence)
(As to Defendant Horry County)

296. The foregoing paragraphs are referred to and incorporated as if set forth verbatim herein.
297. Defendant Horry County had a duty of care to ensure they provided a safe work environment that was free from sexual harassment and retaliation.
298. Defendant Horry County had a duty of care to ensure they did not release sensitive and private information to the public.
299. Defendant Horry County had a duty of care to supervise and train their employees not to violate the constitutional rights of others.
300. Defendant Horry County was grossly negligent in violating their duty of care in the following particulars:
 - a. Failing to maintain a safe working environment;
 - b. Failing to properly supervise Webster;
 - c. Failing to properly train Webster concerning appropriate work behavior;

- d. Failing to properly train employees to avoid retaliation against other employees who complained about sexual harassment;
- e. Failing to properly supervise Klauder and Sissell to insure that they avoid sexual harassment and retaliation;
- f. Failing to properly train HR on how to deal with complaints that OPS investigations were a form of harassment.
- g. Failing to properly train employees about the appropriate response to employees who report sexual harassment;
- h. Failing to properly supervise Leonhardt and Spivey concerning their response to employees who report sexual harassment;
- i. Failing to properly supervise Leonhardt concerning FOIA law;
- j. Failing to properly train Leonhardt concerning FOIA law;
- k. Failing to properly train Leonhardt to avoid disclosure of private information;
- l. Failing to properly supervise the OPS;
- m. Failing to properly supervise Klauder and Sissell to ensure that they avoid creating a hostile work environment;
- n. Failing to properly supervise the OPS to avoid retaliation against employees who disclose inappropriate behavior;
- o. Failing to properly train Leonhardt, Klauder, and Sissell on the 2019 fraternization policy;
- p. Failing to properly train Leonhardt and Spivy on the First Amendment Free Association Clause;
- q. Violating Horry County's own policies;
- r. And such other ways the evidence at trial will show.

301. Defendant Horry County's conduct described above, including its failure to train, supervise, or correct known misconduct after being placed on notice, constituted an intentional, conscious failure to do that which it was incumbent upon Horry County to do, and reflected a conscious indifference to the consequences of its conduct such that Horry County failed to exercise even slight care toward Manemeit, within the meaning of S.C. Code Ann. § 15-78-60.
302. Plaintiff was harmed by the gross negligence of Defendant Horry County.
303. Plaintiff is entitled to recover compensatory damages against Defendant Horry County based on foregoing acts and/or omissions that constitute gross negligence.
304. Plaintiff demands a jury trial as to this cause of action.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays for the following: trial by jury as to all causes of action; judgment against defendants for compensatory damages in an amount to be determined by a jury; judgment against defendants listed above for punitive damages, where appropriate, in an amount to be determined by a jury; the costs of this action; attorneys' fees and cost and such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and proper.

s/ Tristan Shaffer
Tristan M. Shaffer (SC Bar # 77565)

Jonathan "Jonny" McCoy (SC Bar 77540)

Stuart M. Axelrod (SC Bar # 14678)

AXELROD & ASSOCIATES, PA
4701 Oleander Drive
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
Phone: 843-916-9300
Tristan@gotaxelrod.com

ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF