

NYU Langone among hospitals accused of cheating staff of pay

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by [Kirsten Chang](#)

Last Thursday, eight federal labor class action lawsuits were filed against various public and private New York City hospitals, including the NYU Langone Medical Center.

The lawsuits claim that over 100,000 hospital staff members have been systematically cheated out of overtime pay. Registered nurses and employees are accusing hospitals of forcing them to work without breaks or adequate monetary compensation.

Other hospitals named in the lawsuits include Mount Sinai Medical Center and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.

Arguing for the plaintiffs, Associate Justin Cordello of Dolin, Thomas & Solomon, LLP said the hospital's actions are deplorable.

"Ask yourself, when was the last time you were at a hospital and a nurse wasn't available to come to your aid?" he said. "It's a 24/7 operation dealing with life and death issues, which would be fine if these hospital systems didn't automatically take money out of employees' paychecks for these meal breaks. These violations are so sinister and have resulted in employees being cheated out of tens and hundreds of millions of dollars."

Cordello said he expects to serve the complaint relatively shortly and will file motions soon after. However, a spokesperson for Langone said, "We believe that we are in compliance with all applicable laws."

Langone declined to elaborate any further.

A representative of The New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation who is representing the hospitals in question said they have looked through the claim and are preparing a vigorous defense.

The New York City HHC also confirmed reports that state budget cuts will force public hospitals in the city to reduce the workforce by approximately 2,600 over the next fiscal year. According to a preliminary budget testimony issued by HHC President Alan Aviles, initial plans to downsize through attrition have proven insufficient in reducing the budget deficit and layoffs will increase as a result.

In the midst of this financial adversity, Cordello also addressed the potential challenges facing the plaintiffs.

"In respect to these lawsuits, my concern would be that employers might retaliate against employees or create an atmosphere or environment where individuals are scared to participate in these types of lawsuits. Most hospitals understand the Fair Labor Standards Act, a federal law requiring the protection of all employees. There are thousands and thousands of employees who could participate, but they don't know about [the lawsuits]. It's important for others to become interested in participating and to increase awareness of some of the hardships hospital employees are facing."

***Prior results do not guarantee future outcomes.**