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EMT sues over FDNY ‘racism’

By [Mitchel Maddux](#)

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One of the FDNY’s first black female EMTs is suing the city over alleged racial harassment by co-workers.

Lt. Valerie Brancato, 49, says a series of “blatant” incidents began soon after she joined the Emergency Medical Service in 1986.

In fact, she says, she was still in training when one “white male classmate” put on a gorilla mask and told her “it was what African-Americans look like,” says the civil-rights suit, filed in Brooklyn federal court.

Such incidents allegedly continued even after the FDNY absorbed the EMS in 1996. She was routinely passed over for promotion in favor of white male co-workers, according to her lawyer, Jeffrey Goldberg.

A city Law Department spokeswoman responded, “The city denies Brancato was subjected to discrimination.”