



# Coca-Cola's Work Places Called 'Cesspools of Racial Discrimination'

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Coca-Cola has a sordid history of racial discrimination and human rights abuses on a worldwide scale, which persist to this day.

No amount of lies and self-serving propaganda, spread through billions of dollars in advertising, can continue to deceive the public and hide this company's crimes and immoral behavior.

Because of Coke's discrimination against black workers, **Martin Luther King, Jr.**, in his last speech told his audience, **"We are asking you tonight to go out and tell your neighbors not to buy Coca-Cola..."** In 2000, to settle a class action lawsuit accusing Coca-Cola of systematic racial discrimination against African-Americans, the company agreed to pay \$192.5 million in what became the largest racial discrimination settlement in U.S. history!

Black and Latino workers from Coke's bottling plants and warehouses in Queens, Elmsford, and Smithtown, NY and Carlstadt, NJ, dubbed **The Coke 16**, charge that due to years of racial discrimination, they have suffered from biased work assignments, unfair discipline and retaliation, and a caustic work environment.

Current lawsuits claim that minority workers at Coca-Cola are typically assigned to the most undesirable and physically dangerous jobs and that managers contravene the seniority system by giving better jobs and more overtime hours to Caucasian workers with less seniority. Minority workers become the object of racial slurs and are denied opportunities for promotion.

When workers dare to speak out against the abuse, Coca-Cola retaliates against them through unwanted scrutiny, unfair disciplinary actions, suspensions without pay and firings based on fraudulent charges.

Due to the hostile work environments, many victims of Coke's discrimination have suffered significant emotional harm, to the point where they have nightmares and must seek therapy to deal with the stress from work.

Last year, **Coca-Cola's Chief Executive Officer Muhtar Kent, who has consistently lied to shareholders and consumers** about the company's widespread labor, human rights and environmental crimes and other unethical behavior, received more than \$29 million in compensation!

To read profiles and statements of Coca-Cola's victims and to learn more about Coca-Cola's socially-irresponsible behavior and how you can help stop it, visit:

[www.StopCokeDiscrimination.org](http://www.StopCokeDiscrimination.org)

**Protest The Coca-Cola Company's discriminatory practices: Visit [www.facebook.com/TheCoke16](http://www.facebook.com/TheCoke16) and click on "Like" to show your support for The Coke 16 and other minority workers who have joined them.**

[www.KillerCoke.org](http://www.KillerCoke.org) | [info@KillerCoke.org](mailto:info@KillerCoke.org)



# Victims Tell Their Stories and Fight Back

Sixteen black and Hispanic production workers have sued Coca-Cola, claiming they had been forced to work in a “cesspool of racial discrimination.” The lawsuits accuse the company of relegating minorities to less favorable assignments, unfair disciplinary action and retaliation for speaking up, including suspensions without pay and termination. This has taken a great toll on them and their families, emotionally, physically and financially. Since the initial lawsuits, many more victims have stepped forward. **Below, are a few of the personal stories of victims of Coke’s racial discrimination.**

Queens resident **Sandra Walker** was suspended, but found innocent of charges that she told a supervisor, “You’re a dead man,” after witnesses proved she told the supervisor, “You’re a racist.” Yet Sandra was never reimbursed for five weeks lost pay. “I complained about recurring abuses. This led to me being interrogated by persons from Coke’s Human Resources Dept. in Atlanta. I was asked such irrational questions as, ‘Sandra, do you have any personal friends who are HIV Positive?’ Then I was terminated.”

Middletown, NY resident **Ramon Hernandez**, a haulage driver at the Elmsford, NY plant was fired for speaking out against the many injustices to himself and his minority co-workers. “Even though I support a wife and four young children, Coca-Cola tried to prevent me from gaining unemployment benefits and new employment. I eventually got both, but only after suffering significant financial hardship and emotional harm from years of discrimination on the job and my unfair termination.”

Brooklyn resident **Yvette Butler**, in retaliation for speaking up, was unjustly fired from her job. “As a result, I lost my home and with three children had to move into a city homeless shelter for 13 months. I endured offensive

racial comments and harassment on the job, as well as unfair and dangerous work assignments.” Yvette still suffers from depression and anxiety from the mistreatment at the hands of supervisors, managers and co-workers.

Bronx resident **Will Nunez** was twice rushed by ambulance to the hospital from the Maspeth, Queens bottling plant thinking he was having a heart attack. “I was actually suffering from panic attacks due to the stressful work environment that treats black and Latino workers in the plant like 3rd class citizens. I have a wife and six young children and I’m determined to stop the discriminatory practices that have severely hurt me, my family and others.”

Perth Amboy, NJ resident **Freddy Estrada** dared to speak out against the disrespect and discriminatory treatment that is all too pervasive at Coca-Cola’s Carlstadt, NJ, warehouse. “I was fired and denied unemployment benefits based on bogus charges that I stole personnel files, including my own. Coke also claimed that I tried to sell a file back to a co-worker and for that I could face extortion charges. After my firing, I received a call from someone in the warehouse saying they had found my file in the office.”

Queens resident **Diane Worrell** said she has never been so humiliated than when working for Coca-Cola. “I began with Coca-Cola after working 22 years on a job where I never had any problems. From beginning with Coke in 2001, I was constantly singled out and harassed because of my race and weight. Regardless of my seniority and experience, I was put on cleanup in hazardous areas and often without the necessary safety mask and chemical jumpsuit. Like other co-workers, I have suffered from anxiety and sleeplessness and found it necessary to see a psychotherapist to cope with the problems caused by my work environment.”

**Meet more of the plaintiffs and victims at**

**[www.StopCokeDiscrimination.org](http://www.StopCokeDiscrimination.org)**