

Former prison nurse faces another lawsuit alleging sexual misconduct with inmate

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A lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court alleges a pattern of sexual abuse of women inmates by Tony Klein, a nurse who worked at the Wilsonville prison.

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By [Noelle Crombie | The Oregonian/OregonLive](#)

Another former inmate has sued the Oregon Department of Corrections and a slate of administrators for failing to protect her from a nurse she alleges had sex with her on multiple occasions while she was incarcerated.

The lawsuit is the seventh involving sexual misconduct by Tony Klein, a nurse at Coffee Creek Correctional Institution, the state's lone women's prison.

"Klein exploited that atmosphere that 'You do what I tell you to do. You do what I want. We control everything about you.'

"The atmosphere allowed him to thrive," said Michelle Burrows, the woman's lawyer. The woman is also represented by Leonard Williamson, a Salem lawyer who is the former inspector general for the Department of Corrections.

The Oregonian/OregonLive isn't identifying the plaintiff in the lawsuit filed this week because she alleges she is a sexual abuse victim. She is identified in the complaint by an alias.

Klein is no longer with the corrections department. He worked for the prison system from October 2010 through January 2018 when he resigned.

Klein has not been charged with a crime. His nursing license remains active, according to the Oregon State Board of Nursing. According to the agency's website, he has no record of discipline. An agency spokeswoman said she could not say whether an investigation has been opened into Klein's conduct because such information is confidential.

He could not be reached for comment Wednesday.

The corrections department did not respond to an email seeking comment.

In her lawsuit, the woman alleges that Klein groomed inmates for sexual abuse and "had a sexual predator pattern which was known to many staff members."



The woman who filed the suit was serving a sentence for an assault conviction. She was 19 when she entered prison. According to the lawsuit, she worked as an orderly in the medical unit where she cleaned exam rooms. Klein, the suit alleges, discussed his marital difficulties, his home life and other "highly personal issues."

He told the woman she was attractive, the lawsuit states, and eventually took her into "hidden areas" of the medical unit where he kissed and fondled her. The two had sex, the lawsuit alleges.

"She was uncomfortable but Defendant Klein told her that if she told anyone about what was happening, no one would believe her and she would be punished," the lawsuit states.

She said he admitted to her that he had sex with other women inmates.

"His behavior was so odd that it was obvious and notorious," the suit states. "No other medical or security staff would ever assist in cleaning offices or those types of menial tasks."

She alleges that he abused her from 2011 through 2017.

The abuse left her fearful and anxious, the lawsuit claims. The woman experienced sexual abuse as a child and did not receive sexual abuse survivors counseling or drug and alcohol treatment while at Coffee Creek.

The lawsuit alleges the Department of Corrections violated the federal law intended to protect inmates from rape and sexual assault and that the state failed to provide medical care and failed to supervise its employees. She is seeking \$5 million in damages.

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