

## The Department of Labor Files Suit against Lear Corp. for Retaliation and Names Individual Managers

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Over the past several months, our OSHA Newsletters have covered a number of [retaliation/whistleblower claims](#) resulting in severe damages and penalties for the employer. A case of particular interest was *Perez v. Lear Corp.*, where a federal court granted a restraining order requested by the Department of Labor [preventing the employer from committing any retaliatory acts](#) before the OSHA investigation had been completed.<sup>1</sup> The investigation in that case is now complete, and the Department of Labor has filed a lawsuit against Lear Corp., doing business as Rensol Seating LLC, and three of its managers for suspending and terminating employees who reported workplace hazards.

In July 2015, we covered this case because of the rare injunctive relief sought; however, the case has taken yet another interesting turn as individual managers have been named in addition to the employer itself. The suit claims that the employer retaliated against employees by segregating complaining employees from their co-workers and denying them overtime. This case began when an employee complained to a key customer regarding various issues; the employee was suspended for violating company policy by interfering with the customer relationship and then terminated. The suit seeks back wages, interest, compensatory damages, and punitive damages. Additionally, the suit seeks an order directing Lear Corp. to remove all references to this matter from the employees' personnel records.

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<sup>1</sup> *Sec'y of Labor v. Lear Corporation Eeds and Interiors and Rensol Seating, LLC*, Civ. A. No. 15-0205-CG-M (S.D. Ala. May 7, 2015).