

A Case Study on Equality Before the Law - Has Finland Been Able to Protect Its Women in Layoffs Involving Lethal Mold?

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Abstract

Finland has extensive workplace protections to safeguard employees' health and prevent dismissals disguised as cost-cutting when the true issue is mold, creating expenses for building owners. Yet none of these legal protections shielded Ada. As an Industrial Safety Manager, she was threatened with legal consequences if she failed to demand action, but when she did request intervention, she was dismissed and left with a severe, life-threatening mold-induced disability. For a single mother of three building a home, the outcome is a profound miscarriage of justice.

Although mold is common, authorities are obligated to enforce the law and protect employees from occupational illness, yet every authority failed Ada, revealing systemic ignorance and inconsistent practices that blocked her from getting compensation for mold-induced occupational disease. Using a cross-disciplinary doctrinal method, this work exposes structural barriers and gendered inequalities that still limit women's access to justice. Based on Finnish laws and Ada's clear evidence, she should have been compensated for unlawful dismissal and severe disability; her blood tests even showed antibodies matching the mold found at work.

Seemingly, the governmental officers and legal representation display complacency, as the cases are handled in a conveyor-belt fashion. Thus, a governmental and legal "revolution" is required to enforce the laws as they dictate, and employ business-minded performance targets for the official, as this research presumes that helping people is the baseline for establishing various agencies. However, these employments can never exist to permit the absolute or arbitrary exercise of power; and real monitoring is a must.

Keywords: Compensation, equality before the law and governmental officers, illegal layoff, lethal mold at work, occupational disability, protections at work.

Introduction to Equality Before the Law in a Case of Dismissal Involving Lethal Mold Exposure

Although Finland maintains robust national and international obligations to ensure equality before the law, protect employees' health, and prohibit unlawful dismissal, workforces exposed to workplace mold often receive no effective protection. Ada, a pseudonym, exemplifies this failure. She served as HR and Industrial Safety lead at a facility with documented severe mold contamination, including *Streptomyces*. In this role, she had to order reconstruction, staff relocations, and inspections, spending prolonged hours on-site. Ada became the second employee to develop a serious mold-induced illness and was soon dismissed under the pretext of cost savings. Despite confirmation of the same mold in her blood by the employer's occupational health unit, neither the clinic nor the employer facilitated her medical issues. She was later referred to state occupational rehabilitation, but proved too ill to continue following medical malpractice. Subsequent allergy testing triggered an anaphylactic shock, nearly proving fatal. Anaphylactic shock is a medical emergency and can lead to death without prompt treatment. Hence, this study refers to her situation as a *lethal mold case*.

Mold and moisture damage in Finnish buildings remains a serious problem due to poor construction and harsh weather. Professor Valtonen (May 4, 2017) notes that individuals suffering from mold-related illness are often marginalized, with many ending up on disability pensions for depression, despite the true cause being environmental mold exposure (Valtonen, May 4, 2017). Ada experienced similar depression, among many other symptoms, while working in heavily mold-infested premises. Valtonen (May 4, 2017) further observes that official authorities, including the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (KELA), insurance companies, and even the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH), legally the highest authority on occupational health, fail to recognize mold-related illness. He emphasizes that he can make such claims only because he is retired (Valtonen, May 4, 2017). The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare subsequently confirms that bacteria and fungi, including molds and yeasts, can grow in building materials when moisture is present. Sources include rain, melting snow, soil, indoor or outdoor air, plumbing leaks, construction moisture, condensation, and poor ventilation

(Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare). Mold exposure is widespread, affecting an estimated 600,000–800,000 Finns daily (Hengityslitto).

Systemic Ignorance by the FIOH, the Duodecim, and the Regional Agency in Protecting Employees from Mold-Induced Occupational Illness

The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH) is assigned to build a sustainable working life, yet there appear to be some contradicting statements about occupational mold-induced illness (FIOH). They report that there is no direct link between mold at work and employees getting sick (FIOH, November 10, 2025). This is not the case, however, based on an email to Ada, as the FIOH explained that workplace testing revealed microbial growth, specifically streptomycetes, an actinomycete, indicating moisture damage. They noted that these species are commonly found in moisture-affected areas and that prolonged exposure increases the risk of illness (FIOH). The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (2020) further confirms that while fungi/mold can be infectious or toxic, inhalation of spores is more commonly associated with allergic sensitization. Allergic reactions may include asthma, rhinitis, eye inflammation, hives, and eczema (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2020).

The role of the Regional State Administrative Agencies could and should be vital in cases with mold at work, enforcing compliance, but they failed Ada, ignoring her requests for help. Duodecim's Care Guidelines have previously blocked compensation claims for occupational mold illness in the Supreme Court. Duodecim noted earlier that, although moisture-damaged buildings are associated with adverse health effects, the specific causal agents of mold-induced illness cannot be definitively identified, and a medical diagnosis linking illness to mold requires exclusion of other causes (Duodecim, January 25, 2017). This kind of reasoning is exemplified in the Supreme Court judgment KKO: 2019:43, as it declined compensation based on Duodecim's Guidelines. It stated that *the employee's symptoms are temporally consistent with the workplace's moisture damage, but do not meet the criteria for occupational asthma as defined by Duodecim [sic!]* (Supreme Court. KKO: 2019:43). Similarly, the FIOH states even today that there is no recognized medical basis for diagnosing occupational asthma caused by building moisture (FIOH, November 10, 2025). Based on the above facts, this research aims to determine whether Ada's case was handled in accordance with the applicable laws:

Has Finland been able to fulfil its obligations on women's equality before the law, employment, and hazards at work, as well as laws' full protection, stemming from national and international commitments?

This case study preserves anonymity by referring to the principal individual as Ada. All information is, however, verifiable through extensive documentation, including verbatim transcripts, emails, news reports, seating arrangements, court judgments, etc. Building on similar cases, this research

examines whether Finland upheld legal protections for Ada during her mold-induced illness in the workplace and subsequent dismissal. As Ada is an ethnic Finn, this study takes this angle to explore the treatment of women within the judicial system, drawing parallels to Mia's case (Brink, November 26, 2025). For Ada, the relevant authorities are the Regional State Administrative Agency, the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, employer-provided occupational health care services, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the courts, and the police. This research will examine whether there is a broader pattern of institutional neglect toward women, comparable to the systemic inattention by the police, reported in cases of rape and domestic violence. The concentration will be on possible indifferent treatment and procedural inequality, also examining if there could be clear evidence of direct corruption, or "just" institutional alignment with a wealthy employer, undermining the evidentiary chain:

1. *How does women's discrimination emerge in judicial processes concerning occupational disease and illegal dismissal?*
2. *What factors enable these violations, and what could be done to prevent them?*

Applying the Doctrinal Legal Method Across Disciplines

This research employs a doctrinal approach to examine mainly Finnish obligations, with some references to European and international legal responsibilities regarding women's equality before the law, workplace health protections, and unlawful dismissals disguised as cost-saving measures. Legal commitments are analyzed with particular focus on equality at work, employers' duty to safeguard employee health, and provisions on illegal termination. Where implementation gaps are found, potential reforms are proposed. Using a qualitative, critical perspective, the study integrates insights from law, mold as a toxin, employer obligations, employee rights, and procedural misconduct. Special attention is given to the chain of evidence, as Ada's IgG indicators correspond to the mold detected at her workplace, supporting a diagnosis of occupational mold-induced illness. The interplay of health risks, administrative failures, and procedural violations underscores the need for thorough investigation and compliance with employment and occupational safety laws. This research aligns with broader comparative and theoretical approaches promoting legal reform (Hutchinson, December 2015) and contributes to advancing protections for women under the law.

Entrenched Corruption and Systemic Barriers to Women's Equality Before the Law in Finland, Despite the Wide Obligations

This research will examine whether there is a broader pattern of systemic disregard or marginalization of women, as Ada's case appears to display systemic and procedural bias by the governmental officers. If not direct corruption, it may constitute institutional bias favoring a wealthy employer, thereby undermining the evidentiary chain. This kind of ignorance can be displayed due to Finland's hidden, extensive corruption and Dear Brother activity, as described by Mäntysalo (Ministry

of Justice, November 18, 2024) and Salminen (University of Vaasa, September 16, 2018). Yet, Finland is nevertheless bound by many national and international treaties, obligating it to apply equality before the law and legal protections for women. The mentioned treaties and provisions are essential in Ada’s case, as they concern equality before the law and its equal protections, and the critical intersection of employee rights, workplace safety, and corporate governance. These rights should safeguard women in hazardous work, protect against layoffs disguised as savings, and, above all, ensure government officers apply the laws fairly. The essential laws concerning women’s equality before the law are the Finnish Constitution (1999, Ch. 2, §6), European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR, Art. 14, and Protocol 12, Art. 1), Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (CFREU, 2012, Art. 20), and Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1981, Art. 15(1)). Yet, if provisions collide, EU law takes precedence to inherently Finnish laws (Korkein Hallinto-oikeus/The Supreme Administrative Court, 2024).

The Legal Architecture of Occupational Safety, Health, and Equality in Finland: Tides are Turning and Winds are Strengthening for Reform

Importantly, the formerly so-important care guidelines and occupational diagnoses in mold cases *are no longer valid*, as the Finnish Medical Society Duodecim and the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH) have ceased establishing them (FIOH, November 10, 2025; Duodecim, 2025). These are important factors, as these guidelines have, among others, blocked compensation for mold-induced illness. Accordingly, the agency for enforcing occupational health law, the Regional State Administrative Agency, also ceases to exist at the end of 2025, even when some tasks are transferred to the Finnish Supervisory Agency (Regional State

Administrative Agencies). Other soft law is presented by the International Labour Organization (ILO), such as the C155 on the Occupational Safety and Health Convention (ILO, 1981). Insurance-related actors are the insurance companies and the Insurance Court (Insurance Court). Here is s detailed list, exemplified also in Chart 1, that should be regarded in mold-induced occupational disease:

1. Occupational Safety and Health Act (2023) - Prevention of Occupational Diseases: Employers must not endanger employee health, have a general duty to ensure workplace safety, and are required to identify and assess occupational risks systematically (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland, Ch. 1, §1; Ch. 2, §§8, 10);
2. Occupational Healthcare Act (2021) - Prevention of Work-Related Illnesses (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland, Ch. 1, §1);
3. Non-Discrimination Act (2014) & Criminal Code (2021) - Prevent disability-based discrimination and classify discrimination or endangering workplace safety as criminal offences (Ministry of Justice, Finland, Non-Discrimination Act, Cp.1, §1; Criminal Code, Ch. 47, §§1, 3);
4. Employment Contracts Act (2023) - Prohibits termination of permanent employment due to illness or reporting workplace hazards to authorities (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Finland, Ch. 7, §§2, 3);
5. Damages Act (2010) - Provides compensation for damages caused by employer negligence (Ministry of Justice, Finland, Ch. 2, §1)
6. Workers’ Compensation Act (2015) – Compensates employees for occupational diseases primarily caused by workplace factors, e.g., chemicals (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Workers’ Compensation Act, Ch. 1, §1)

LAWS, AUTHORITIES, AND REPRESENTATIONS FOR INSURANCES AND MEDICINE FOR MOLD-INDUCED OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES			
STRONGLY BINDING LEGAL SOURCES	SOFT LAW INSTRUMENTS	OTHER PARTIES INVOLVED (EARLIER) DEFINING AN OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE	
Occupational Safety and Health Act	Judgments of the Supreme Court	Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and subordinate agencies:	Insurance Court
Occupational Healthcare Act	International Labour Organization: C155 on Occupational Safety and Health Convention		Insurance companies
Non-discrimination Act		Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, yet no longer valid mold-induced diagnoses for occupational asthma	Finnish Medical Society Duodecim, yet no longer valid Current Care Guidelines for mold-induced occupational disease
Criminal Code (discrimination, work safety)		Ceases to exist: Regional State Administrative Agency	Occupational health care units
Employment Contracts Act (dismissal based on illness, or contacting authorities)			
Damages Act			
Workers’ Compensation Act (occupational diseases)			

Chart 1: The provisions on mold-induced occupational disease

Recruitment, Transfers, and Denied HR Manager Position: Assignment of Additional Duties and a Lower-Ranked, Lower-Paid Role

Ada was initially recruited through a staffing agency to handle Human Resources (HR) and quality tasks for the subsidiary, and voluntarily moved between the parent company and the subsidiary several times. After briefly working in quality, she was transferred to the parent company, then later requested back at the subsidiary by the former CEO as HR Manager. However, it turned out to be something else, as she was also forced to take on Industrial Safety Managing responsibilities, and her title was downgraded to HR Coordinator, justifying a lower salary but a double workload. When the mold problem arose, Ada's workload intensified even more, and she also fell ill from mold. She received no overtime payment and was repeatedly assigned to the same damp office.

Later, when the mold situation was severe, Ada suspected that she was being dropped from the Board and other duties with higher responsibility at the parent company because of her role as Industrial Safety Manager, and presumably by the parent CFO responsible for the real estate and their expenses. The real estate branch had accordingly decided to generate profit, so Ada's actions negated the profit. Accordingly, it was obvious how the CFO wanted to get rid of Ada, as he ordered the new subsidiary CEO to have Ada resign with only one month's salary. As a single mother of three, with a house under construction and compromised health, this was untenable. Accordingly, no internal reassignment was offered; it was frankly declined. Yet, Ada's duties effectively spanned HR and Industrial Safety Management, roughly split 50/50. Her dismissal, amid ongoing health hazards, procedural lapses, and repeated administrative interference, underscores severe mismanagement and raises serious legal and ethical concerns.

Employer Aware of Hazardous Workplace Mold Causing Illness, and Governmental Officers Confirm the Adverse Health Effects on Employees

When Ada assumed responsibility for Industrial Safety Management and HR at the subsidiary, workplace safety was already in severe disarray: meaningful protective measures had been neglected for years, over one hundred employees lacked written employment contracts, and mold contamination had affected the office area, including Ada's own workspace. Actinomycete mold (*Streptomyces*) was confirmed by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH), and Ada herself tested positive for the corresponding IgG antibody. Confronted with significant health hazards, she sought to address the situation strictly in accordance with the advice of union counsel, occupational health services, FIOH, and applicable law. She was simultaneously threatened with legal consequences if the mold issue remained unresolved. Yet, after her dismissal, she learned that the employer had long been aware of the contamination and had previously relocated affected employees without informing her.

Although the employer later attempted to attribute responsibility to Ada, she was never invited to any remediation meetings, which were led by the CFO of the parent company,

who oversaw the buildings. During Ada's statutory vacation, a superficial remediation was carried out: roughly one square meter of contaminated flooring was opened without isolation measures, leaving personnel exposed. The CFO then ordered employees back into the premises, declaring them safe. Doubting this, Ada requested an inspection by the Regional State Administrative Agency following the initiation of her layoff process. The premises ultimately remained contaminated, staff became ill, and the entire office wing was closed on health grounds, as confirmed by the Regional Agency. The Agency initially withheld the report from Ada, releasing it only after she contacted its on-duty unit. A responsible official subsequently called her, concerned about potential action against the Agency or him. It was evident that the Agency had failed to comply with its statutory obligations to enforce workplace safety and prevent hazardous conditions, *despite Ada's repeated requests for lawful intervention.*

Dismissal Procedure Conducted Amid Ongoing Hiring and Attempts to Prevent Evidence Disclosure

Although the company as a whole employed approximately 400 people, Ada - a single parent of three - was the only employee laid off at that time, despite having previously transferred staff under cost-saving measures. Before her dismissal, seven employees were moved to the parent company without termination. In violation of the *Employment Contracts Act*, the new subsidiary CEO employed personnel from the parent company to the subsidiary shortly before Ada's dismissal, noting in an email that 19 senior employees now worked for the subsidiary despite 34 recent terminations. Ada sought to prevent these hires from undermining prior layoffs, but the CEO proceeded regardless. The employer cited economic grounds for termination, yet Ada's annual salary (circa €36,000) pales in comparison to the estimated €912,000 annual cost of the newly hired senior staff. This pattern fails to meet the statutory requirements for economic or production-related termination under the *Employment Contracts Act*, particularly as roughly 30 employees had just been dismissed, some of whom were later reinstated under union pressure.

Ada also alleges that the CFO, responsible for company buildings, sought improper savings by leaving the mold-contaminated offices untreated, ignoring medical recommendations. After her dismissal, which took place on the first day after returning from sick leave, the CFO immediately deactivated her email, while she had already secured key evidence. He was subsequently promoted and initiated a search for a new HR manager with Ada's qualifications. The abrupt termination, immediate account closure, and subsequent hiring raise serious concerns regarding procedural fairness, potential legal violations, and wrongful dismissal. Half of Ada's duties involved Industrial Safety Management, a statutory role the employer is required to maintain. Under the *Employment Contracts Act* (Ch. 7, §3), financial or production-related grounds for termination require demonstrable economic necessity, which is clearly unsupported by the employer's actions:

“At least the following *shall not constitute grounds for termination*:

1. either before termination or *thereafter the employer has employed a new employee for similar duties* even though the employer's operating conditions have not changed during the equivalent period; or
2. *no actual reduction of work has taken place* as a result of work reorganization.” (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Finland, 2023. Employment Contracts Act Ch. 7, §3, highlighted by this research).

Accordingly, when further referring to grounds for termination, it cannot be based on the employee's person. Ada's interactions with the new CEO were strained, as he had earlier pressured her to hire an unqualified subordinate's son, leading to unpleasant email exchanges. Dismissal cannot either be based on a person's illness or disability. This is important for Ada, as she fell seriously ill at work and got a lethal and permanent mold-induced occupational disability. She also contacted the instances that should provide for legal protections. Under Ch. 7, *Grounds for termination of the employment contract by means of notice*, it is prohibited to dismiss a person based on the person's illness or disability or based on the employee's resort to legal protection available to employees:

“Ch. 7, §2. *Termination grounds related to the employee's person*. {...] At least the following cannot be regarded as proper and weighty reasons: 1) *illness, disability* [...] 4) *resort to means of legal protection available to employees*.” (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Finland, 2023. Employment Contracts Act, Ch. 7, §2, highlighted by this research).

Procedural Fraud, Representation Without Legal Competence, and the Bar on Submitting New Evidence After Commencement of the Main Hearing

After discovering that the dismissal process violated the law, Ada initiated civil proceedings and engaged union-appointed counsel, who proved unqualified and instructed her sole witness, her former manager, not to appear. Consequently, Ada faced a well-resourced international corporation without supporting evidence, and the district court swiftly dismissed her claim. For the appellate proceedings, she retained an experienced attorney, whom she deemed competent. Nevertheless, confusion - potentially deliberate and by design - arose between the parent company and its subsidiary: the CFO responsible for the premises was employed by the parent company, while the CEO belonged to the subsidiary. Ada was dismissed by the subsidiary despite generating approximately €1 million in savings, and the new CEO admitted that the decision was not his. After losing the case, she was ordered to pay the employer's legal costs, which were forwarded directly to a debt-collection agency, bypassing standard Finnish invoicing practices.

Ada's case would have benefited from presenting all emails and organizational charts at appeal, demonstrating that the layoff was disguised as cost-cutting, while 19 staff had recently been

hired, and some previously dismissed employees were rehired. Under the *Code of Judicial Procedure*, Ch. 25, §17, appellate hearings must be continuous and based on the materials presented to the district court. The opportunity to challenge the district court counsel's incompetence was not taken, further weakening her position:

“In a civil matter, *the appellant may not in the court of appeal refer to other circumstances or evidence* than those presented in the district court *unless* he or she establishes a probability that he or *she had not been able to refer to the circumstance or evidence* in the district court or that he or she has had a justifiable reason for not doing so“ (Ministry of Justice, Finland, 2016. Code of Judicial Procedure, Ch. 25, §17, highlighted with italics by this research).

Accordingly, several false statements were made by the employer in court, and this is, unfortunately, enabled by the lack of verbatim transcriptions in the Finnish court hearings. This possibly makes the police unwilling to conduct any investigations, as it would be so labor-intensive to transcribe the hearings. Yet, procedural fraud is a crime that violates the *Code of Judicial Procedure*, Ch. 14, §1 (Ministry of Justice, Finland) and also the Criminal Code, Ch. 36, §1, *Fraud and other dishonesty*, as follows:

“A person who, to obtain unlawful economic benefit for himself or herself or another person *or to cause damage to another person*, deceives another person or takes advantage [...], and *this way causes economic loss* to the deceived person [...] shall be sentenced for fraud to a fine or to imprisonment for at most two years.” (Ministry of Justice, Finland, 2021. Criminal Code, Ch. 36, §1, highlighted with italics by this research).

Although the appellate judge asked relevant questions and appeared attentive, Ada still lost the case, surprising even her attorney. The hearing recordings show extreme confusion and false statements regarding the parent and subsidiary companies. The employer disregarded that 19 staff had been hired before Ada's dismissal, ignored her cost-saving measures, and the CFO contradicted his claim of wanting her terminated. The new CEO admitted he did not wish for her dismissal. Yet, the Centre for Occupational Safety confirmed Ada's role as Industrial Safety Manager for both entities, yet the employer acted as if the position could be eliminated. Accordingly, no genuine discussion occurred regarding her future. During her sick leave, the CEO summoned Ada under the pretext of duty discussions but handed her notice of statutory co-operation negotiations. Evidence, such as a seating chart excluding Ada, demonstrates the dismissal decision had already been made. The CEO also relocated staff to mold-infested premises despite prior objections. Ada's employment certificate and business card further confirm her extensive duties across both companies, including HR, Occupational Safety, Board membership, Office Services, Marketing, and Overseas Assignments - far exceeding the employer's court assertions.

The Coherent Chain of Evidence Establishing Lethal Mold Exposure and Permanent Occupational Disease

Special attention is due to the chain of evidence, which strongly supports a diagnosis of permanent occupational mold-induced illness and disability. Ada was reported to have IgG antibodies to the same mold detected at the workplace; thus, Ada's symptoms coincided with confirmed workplace mold contamination, establishing a clear causal and temporal link between the hazardous environment and her ongoing condition. The record shows serious failures by public authorities and the employer's occupational health unit, which either concealed findings or acted with gross negligence. Since exposure, Ada has been unable to remain in moisture-damaged buildings, forcing changes to accommodation and workplaces and causing substantial personal and financial harm. Despite submitting the full chain of evidence to the police, the Regional State Administrative Agency, and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, her rights have not been protected. The employer's health-care provider likewise failed to advocate on her behalf, likely to avoid jeopardizing its corporate client. The chain of evidence is as follows:

First Year

- Ada commenced employment at the subsidiary.

Second Year

- November: The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH) reports significant mold contamination at the workplace, highlighting high levels of actinomycetes, specifically *Streptomyces*;
- December: The employer's occupational health care unit confirms mold presence and notes Ada's deteriorating health;
- Ada experiences severe respiratory distress; the attending occupational health care physician expresses shock that she could come to treatment unassisted;
- FIOH confirms Ada has IgG antibodies to the same mold detected at the workplace [*sic!*].

Third Year - Employer's Occupational Health Care Unit Reports

- Reports in May, August, and September indicate Ada's symptoms are mold-induced; she cannot remain at work longer than 1½ hours due to respiratory and systemic effects, including sinus inflammation, dizziness, and ear pain;

- The Care Unit issues a medical certificate recognizing Ada as suffering from occupational mold-induced illness, also submitted to the insurance provider

Sixth Year

- Ada undergoes hospital examinations for mold exposure and suffers an anaphylactic shock; Ada narrowly survives the shock.

Seventh Year

- The Regional State Administrative Agency (AVI) reports full closure of the mold-damaged "C Hall" where Ada worked, after employees fell ill.

Fourteenth Year

- An occupational health care specialist formally states in writing that mold exposure permanently destroyed Ada's health.

Legal and Scientific Parallels Between Ada's Case and the Supreme Court's Mold Exposure Decision: Identical Workplace Causation Verified by IgG Antibodies

The Supreme Court has established precedents on occupational disease and mold, notably the KKO: 1998:22 (VA96/71), addressing workplace mold and moisture damage, employee symptoms, and the legal definition of occupational disease (Supreme Court, KKO: 1998:22). The now-cancelled reliance on the FIOH and Duodecim's Current Care Guidelines has skewed practice; this research, therefore, emphasizes only this judgment. Comparison with Ada's case reveals a clear miscarriage of justice: authorities failed to apply Finnish and EU law, the employer misrepresented her job title, and false statements in court constituted procedural fraud. Severe symptoms prevented Ada from completing peak expiratory flow tests, and pre-existing pollen asthma was wrongly cited as the cause. Under KKO: 1998:22 and Finnish law, Ada should have been diagnosed with an occupational disease and compensated for permanent disability and unlawful dismissal disguised as cost savings. Her termination, allegedly for economic reasons, contradicts the *Employment Contracts Act*, given her statutory role and work-related illness. The dismissal also appears to violate the *Non-Discrimination Act* and the *Criminal Code* on discrimination and occupational safety, reflecting clear *employer negligence*.

Occupational Safety and Health Act	Employer's Negligence KKO: 1998:22 Occupational disease - Mold-induced illness	Employer's Negligence Ada's Case
Chapter 1, Section 1: The employee's health must not be endangered	The employee had fallen ill from mold due to the employer's negligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ada had fallen ill from mold due to the employer's negligence the CFO ordered staff back to the moisture-damaged premises by email
Chapter 2, Section 8: Employers must safeguard employees' safety by taking necessary measures	Water damage and damp structures were observed, and insufficient measures were taken	The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health: visible mold and Streptomyces, present in both Ada and the workplace.
Chapter 2, Section 10: Employer's duty to identify and assess hazards	No information on whether other employees have experienced symptoms	Ada and the occupational health clinic approached the CFO due to employees' symptoms, yet no action was taken
Causal and temporal link between the moisture damage and the illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strong causal link: a clear match between the building's microbes and the plaintiff's IgG/IgE antibodies the plaintiff was diagnosed with occupational allergic rhinitis and conjunctivitis the court ordered compensation for damages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strong causal and temporal link: a clear match between the building's microbes and Ada's IgG antibodies. Ada fell seriously ill with anaphylaxis shock a permanent disability no compensation, no diagnoses of occupational disease
Assessment of negligence	The harm could have been prevented; there were probable causes for the illness	The mold-induced illness could have been prevented; the employer was negligent.

Chart 2: Exact Mold Match in the Supreme Court judgment and Ada's Case

Systemic, Unmonitored Inequality, Legal Malpractice, and Government Neglect in Mold-Induced Occupational Illness Case

To address the research questions, this study concludes that Ada was not protected by law. The study demonstrates that discrimination against women can appear in judicial processes through a reluctance to examine evidence or apply legal protections. In Ada's case, Finland failed to enforce any of the numerous statutes that should have protected her rights, including the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Employment Contracts Act, the Non-Discrimination Act, the Criminal Code (provisions on discrimination and endangering occupational safety), the Damages Act, the Occupational Diseases Act, the Occupational Healthcare Act, and the fundamental principle of equality before the law. None of the responsible institutions - occupational health services, the Regional State Administrative Agency, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the police, or the courts - fulfilled their statutory duties. Even the procedural guarantees in the Code of Judicial Procedure were ignored, signalling *a broader systemic neglect against women by governmental officials*.

The pattern suggests a systematic reluctance to apply the law when the opposing Party is a large corporation. Government officials appear to engage in risk-avoidance by favoring powerful enterprises rather than protecting individuals with limited resources. Regarding factors contributing to discrimination, the study identifies that Ada, being a woman without wealth, status, or public influence, was treated as expendable. Oversight mechanisms failed; either the goals of oversight are misplaced, or officials simply neglected their duties. The analysis of both Ada's and Mia's cases (Brink, November 26, 2025) indicates that gender-based injustice

permeates multiple sectors. Lawyers and government officials have become complacent, relying on superficial assessments that consider only a fraction of the available evidence, often in ways that favor the wealthier party.

Repairing Procedures Against Women's Ignorance and Raising Judicial Integrity and Transparency in Finnish Dismissal and Occupational Disease Proceedings

The failure to uphold judicial integrity and transparency arises from systemic issues, chiefly the non-application of laws and inadequate, incompetent oversight. Arrogance and self-interest within the enforcement system render legally mandated protections ineffective. While this study mainly concentrates on court processes, it underscores the need for comprehensive governmental reform and ethical accountability. Superficially robust, Finland's employment and occupational health oversight lacks transparency in practice, leaving victims of unlawful dismissals unprotected. Legal systems must not function as instruments for authoritarian behavior among public officials. Ensuring consistent application of employment, occupational health, and equality laws, strengthening independent oversight and accountability, and fostering ethical conduct among public officials are vital. Thus, this research proposes the following business-style performance targets to governmental officers for legal reform:

→ The success of governmental officers is defined by the number of people they helped;

→ Clear evidence for this must be provided, and funding is determined based on good performance.

Yet, as the judges are often the last resort, their role is essential, but should be lessened to avoid absolute power.

Their role has to be modified to ensure that lawyers and legal professionals properly represent their clients' interests and intervene when necessary, during court proceedings. Judges are also responsible for ensuring that the law is followed. As legal matters are currently handled in a conveyor-belt fashion, favoring large corporations, a "revolution" is required. The issues at court could be addressed through revisions to the Code of Judicial Procedure, thereby enhancing transparency:

- Obligation for all courts to employ a clerk to transcribe all testimonies verbatim, thus using them as a certified record;
- Obligation to provide Parties with the right to actively raise objections during the hearing, to prevent procedural fraud;
- Obligation for the judges to actively raise awareness of the applicable laws, guide the process, and monitor the legal representation;
- Obligation to provide for non-political layperson juries for the transparency of judicial procedures;
- Obligation for the court to instruct laypersons on the applicable laws, for example, an audiovisual presentation by email or text message

Conclusion on Intersecting Legal, Health, and Equality Challenges in the Workplace

A serious revolution in the way the governmental officers function is desperately required, with a new performance-based funding and real monitoring. This case raises serious questions about equality before the law in employment, particularly in hazardous workplaces. Finnish law guarantees fair treatment, transparency, and protection against discrimination, yet Ada's dismissal exposes a gap between these legal promises and actual practice. Despite constitutional and international commitments, institutional responses fell short, showing that legal protections can fail without rigorous enforcement. Yet, the legal framework for occupational safety, health, and equality in Finland is complex and evolving.

Legislative reforms that end the operations of the Regional State Administrative Agency and cease the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health's role in diagnosing mold-related illnesses signal potential progress, as does Duodecim's decision not to issue Current Care Guidelines for mold-related conditions anymore. Yet, Ada's experience shows protections can be undermined when employers ignore hazards, bypass HR procedures, or misapply dismissal rules. She was denied the HR Manager role, reassigned to a lower-ranking position with reduced pay, and faced obstructed access to evidence crucial to her defence. Hazardous mold in the workplace caused illness among staff, confirmed by government inspections, yet the employer failed to act.

Procedural flaws compounded the problem: her legal representation lacked full competence, and she was barred from presenting new evidence once the main hearing began. Nonetheless, the chain of evidence - documentation, inspections, and correspondence - verifies lethal mold exposure

and permanent occupational disease. Comparison with a Supreme Court occupational disease judgment KKO: 1998:22 shows an exact match with IgG antibody evidence, confirming her claim and highlighting systemic failures. Ada's experience underscores the urgent need for enforceable protections, procedural integrity, and accountability in workplaces with serious hazards. *Still, all these measures are meaningless if those responsible for enforcing them act out of greed or moral corruption.* Ultimately, and most importantly for Ada, despite being wronged, she asserts that she remains no one's victim

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