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## Fired 'ill' nanny sues for wages

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LOWER MANHATTAN A domestic worker who says she was fired after falling "extremely ill" is suing her former employers for lost wages and damages.

Silvia Medina, who came from Mexico to work in the U.S. seven years ago, said at a recent press conference that she was paid below minimum wage for the four years she worked as a nanny. According to her lawyer, Medina's wages — paid in cash — sometimes dipped as low as \$240 per week. Medina was also made to wash dishes, clean

**"This was an unjust firing," Medina**

clothes and scrub the floor, she said, even though she was only paid to take care of the Manhattan couple's two young children.

In June 2006, Medina became ill and was hospitalized. Three days later, Medina said, she was fired with no notice or severance pay. She would not disclose the nature of her illness, but said her employers paid for her stay in the hospital.

"I was fired because of what had happened to me, as if I was at fault for getting sick," Medina said, through a translator. "This

was an unjust firing."

The civil suit filed by Medina's lawyers demands the payment of wages up to the legal minimum, overtime pay and damages. Anne Marie O'Donovan, an attorney with MPY Legal Services, said Medina's employers included a city labor relations official. She added that the case was representative of conditions faced by domestic workers across the city, and called on State legislators to pass more stringent labor laws for domestic workers.

Medina's former employers, who now live in Ridgewood, N.J., could not be reached for comment.