



**U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**

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**Press Release**

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# **Aurora Renovations and Developments, LLC Will Pay \$50,000 to Settle Religious Discrimination and Retaliation Suit**

Settles Federal Charges Company Fired Employees for Refusing to Participate in Mandatory Prayer Meetings

GREENSBORO, N.C. -- Aurora Renovations and Developments, LLC, doing business as Aurora Pro Services, a North Carolina-based residential home service and repair company, has agreed to pay \$50,000 and provide other relief to settle a religious harassment, discrimination, and retaliation lawsuit brought by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the agency announced today.

According to the EEOC, since at least June 2020, Aurora Pro Services required all employees to attend daily employer-led Christian prayer meetings. The meetings were conducted by the company owner and included Bible readings, Christian devotionals, and solicitation of prayer requests from employees. Aurora's owner took roll before some of the meetings and reprimanded employees who did not attend. When a construction manager asked to be excused from the prayer portion of the meetings in the fall of 2020, the company refused to accommodate the

employee's religious beliefs, cut his pay, and fired him. A few months later, in January 2021, Aurora Pro Services fired a customer service representative who stopped attending the prayer meetings because the meetings conflicted with her religious beliefs.

Such alleged conduct violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits religious discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in the workplace.

The EEOC filed suit in U.S. District Court, Middle District of North Carolina (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission v. Aurora Renovations and Developments, LLC, d/b/a Aurora Pro Services, Civil Action No.: 1:22-cv-00490) after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its voluntary conciliation process.

In addition to awarding damages to the affected employees, the three-year consent decree settling the suit prohibits the company from discriminating and retaliating against employees in violation of Title VII in the future. Aurora Pro Services will adopt and implement a new anti-discrimination, non-retaliation, and religious accommodation policy and provide training to all managers and employees, including the owner.

“Federal law protects employees from having to choose between their sincerely held religious beliefs and their jobs,” said Melinda C. Dugas, regional attorney for the EEOC's Charlotte District. “Employers who sponsor prayer meetings in the workplace have a legal obligation to accommodate employees whose personal religious beliefs conflict with the company's practice.”

For more information on religious discrimination, please visit

**<https://www.eeoc.gov/religious-discrimination>** (**<https://www.eeoc.gov/religious-discrimination>**).

The EEOC's Charlotte District is charged with the enforcement of federal laws against employment discrimination in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia.

The EEOC advances opportunity in the workplace by enforcing federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. More information is available at **[www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)** (**<http://www.eeoc.gov>**). Stay connected with the latest EEOC news by subscribing to our **[email updates](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USEEOC/subscriber/new)** (**<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USEEOC/subscriber/new>**).

