



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Press Release

03-13-2024

Charter Communications to Pay \$60,000 in EEOC Disability Discrimination Lawsuit

Settles Federal Charges Company Insufficiently Accommodated Vision-Impaired Employee

MILWAUKEE – Charter Communications, LLC, a broadband connectivity company and cable operator also known as Spectrum, will pay \$60,000 and provide other relief to settle a disability accommodation lawsuit filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency announced today.

According to the lawsuit, Charter violated federal law when it refused to provide an ongoing schedule accommodation for an employee with a disability. The employee, who could not drive at night due to cataracts and night blindness, was assigned a shift ending at 9 p.m. and asked to be moved to an earlier shift. Charter initially granted the request for a shift change, but only for one month. When the accommodation expired, the employee requested an extension. Charter's internal policy permitted work-schedule changes, but Charter summarily denied this request. According to the EEOC, Charter moved the employee back to the shift ending at 9 p.m. despite the employee's ongoing disability and need for

accommodation, stating that “assistance with your commute” is “not required under the ADA.”

Such alleged conduct violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which prohibits disability discrimination and requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities, including shift accommodations, where appropriate. The EEOC filed suit (EEOC v. Charter Communications, LLC, Civil Action No. 2:18-cv-1333) in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its administrative conciliation process. The district court granted Charter summary judgment, finding that the employee did not need any accommodation to perform an essential job function. However, the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit reversed and remanded the dismissal (EEOC v. Charter Communications, LLC, Case No. 22-1231, 75 F.4th 729 (7th Cir. 2023)).

“The ADA requires employers to make reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities who are qualified to do their jobs,” said Gregory Gochanour, regional attorney for the EEOC’s Chicago District. “The Seventh Circuit’s decision and the resolution in this case makes clear that if an employer believes that whether an employee can get to work is not their problem, they may run afoul of the ADA. In this case, where attendance was an essential function of the job, Charter would have fared better had it accommodated its employee.”

Amrith Kaur Aakre, director of the Chicago District Office, said, “The ADA requires employers to consult with employees who request help in connection with a disability, and to participate in an interactive process to find reasonable accommodations that enable employees with disabilities to do their jobs. In this case, Charter’s efforts fell short.”

For more information on disability discrimination, please visit <https://www.eeoc.gov/disability-discrimination> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/disability-discrimination>).

The EEOC’s Chicago District Office has jurisdiction over Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota, with Area Offices in Milwaukee and Minneapolis.

The EEOC prevents and remedies unlawful employment discrimination and advances equal opportunity for all. More information is available at 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>).

Recent Press Releases from the Milwaukee Area Office

EEOC Sues The Cleaning Authority-Fox Valley for Sexual Harassment and Retaliation (<https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-cleaning-authority-fox-valley-sexual-harassment-and-retaliation>)

Giertsen to Pay \$140,000 to Settle EEOC Race Harassment and Retaliation Lawsuit (<https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/giertsen-pay-140000-settle-eeoc-race-harassment-and-retaliation-lawsuit>)

Recent Press Releases on the Subject of Disability

Mead Johnson to Make \$15,000 Charitable Donation to Resolve EEOC Disability Lawsuit After Death of Charging Party (<https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/mead-johnson-make-15000-charitable-donation-resolve-eeoc-disability-lawsuit-after-death>)

Walmart Agrees to Pay \$70,000 and Offer Job to Employee in EEOC Disability Discrimination Suit (<https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/walmart-agrees-pay-70000-and-offer-job-employee-eeoc-disability-discrimination-suit>)

Walmart Acuerda Pagar \$70,000 y Ofrece Trabajo a Empleado en una Demanda por Discriminación por Discapacidad de la EEOC (<https://www.eeoc.gov/es/newsroom/walmart-acuerda-pagar-70000-y-ofrece-trabajo-empleado-en-una-demanda-por-discriminacion>)