



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Press Release

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EEOC Sues Ecoserv, Charging a Pattern or Practice of Not Hiring Black, Female and Older Applicants

Federal Agency Charges Cleaning Company Also Retaliated Against an HR Employee Who Opposed the Discrimination

NEW ORLEANS – Ecoserv, LLC, an industrial cleaning company in Abbeville, Louisiana, violated federal law by engaging in a pattern or practice of refusing to hire applicants who were Black, female, or 40 years old or over, and by firing a human resources employee who opposed the discriminatory practices, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) charged in a lawsuit filed on Sept. 22.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, Ecoserv instructed a former human resources employee to limit the number of African American workers she hired. The HR official also became aware of other discriminatory practices of not hiring women or older workers for non-office positions. The HR official opposed Ecoserv's practices by refusing to discriminate and informing a manager that she believed the company's hiring practices violated the law. Shortly thereafter, Ecoserv retaliated against her by firing her. The lawsuit alleges that evidence confirmed that Ecoserv routinely engaged in discrimination by denying employment to Black, female and older

applicants for non-salaried, non-office positions.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in hiring on the basis of race and sex. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) prohibits discriminating against applicants aged 40 or over. The EEOC filed suit in U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana, Lafayette Division, (Civil Action No. 23-1321) after first trying to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process.

“Title VII and the ADEA protect workers who refuse to follow orders to discriminate by making retaliation illegal,” said Rudy Sustaita, regional attorney for the EEOC’s Houston District Office.

Michael Kirkland, director of the EEOC’s New Orleans Field Office, added, “It is unacceptable for employers to deny employment opportunities to applicants because of their age, race or sex.”

Elizabeth Owen, a senior trial attorney in the EEOC’s New Orleans Field Office, stated, “In order to achieve Title VII’s promise of a discrimination-free workplace, employees must be able to safely complain about discrimination without fear of reprisal.”

For more information on race and color discrimination, please visit <https://www.eeoc.gov/racecolor-discrimination> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/racecolor-discrimination>). For more information on sex-based discrimination, please visit <https://www.eeoc.gov/sex-based-discrimination> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/sex-based-discrimination>). For more information on age discrimination, please visit <https://www.eeoc.gov/age-discrimination> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/age-discrimination>). For more information on retaliation, please visit <https://www.eeoc.gov/retaliation> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/retaliation>).

The lawsuit was commenced by the EEOC’s New Orleans Field Office, which is part of its Houston District Office, which has jurisdiction over Louisiana and parts of Texas.

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>). Stay connected with the latest EEOC news by subscribing to our [email updates](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts) (<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts>

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