



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

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**Press Release**

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# **Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Louisiana to Pay \$60,000 to Settle EEOC Disability Discrimination and Retaliation Lawsuit**

New Orleans Store Settles Charge It Fired Employee Because of Ankle Injury

NEW ORLEANS – Goodwill Industries of Southeast Louisiana, Inc. has agreed to pay a former employee \$60,000 to settle a lawsuit brought by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency announced today. The lawsuit was resolved through a consent decree, which

U.S. District Judge Carl J. Barbier approved on May 1.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, Goodwill fired and denied rehire to an employee who suffered an ankle injury after recently being promoted to manager of a Goodwill store in New Orleans. The manager sought to return to work shortly after her injury, and when she had obtained a full release from her doctor, Goodwill told her she had been terminated. The manager reapplied for her position but was not rehired, the EEOC said.

The EEOC argued that Goodwill's termination of the manager and refusal to rehire

her were due to her ankle injury and in retaliation for requesting a reasonable accommodation. Such alleged conduct violates the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which prohibits disability discrimination and retaliation for asserting rights under the ADA.

The EEOC filed its suit (Civil Action No. 2:23-cv-1261) in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, and the parties jointly moved to enter a consent decree to resolve the suit. Under the two-year decree, Goodwill will pay the former employee \$60,000 in back pay and damages and will post a notice that affirms its obligations under the ADA.

“Taking adverse employment actions due to perceived impairments and requests for accommodations violate the ADA,” said Rudy Sustaita, regional attorney for the EEOC’s Houston District Office.

Peter Theis, trial attorney in the EEOC’s New Orleans Field Office, noted, “We are pleased that the parties were able to quickly reach a resolution that is in the interest of justice.”

Michael Kirkland, director for the EEOC’s New Orleans Field Office, commented, “Employees regarded as having disabilities by their employers are protected by the ADA, and employers must comply with the law.”

For more information on disability discrimination, please visit <https://www.eeoc.gov/disability-discrimination>. For more information on retaliation, please visit <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. The Houston District Office covers 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/USEEOC/subscriber/new).

