



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Press Release

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Hobe Sound Nursing Home Operators to Pay \$67,500 to Settle EEOC National Origin Discrimination Lawsuit

Haitian Applicant Denied Employment at Nursing Home After Being Subjected to Discriminatory Comments by Owner and Manager, Federal Agency Charged

MIAMI – Nursing home operators Hobe Sound OPCO and related companies Hobe Sound Realty, TOH Holdings, and HSRE, have agreed to pay \$67,500 to settle a national origin discrimination lawsuit filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency announced today.

According to the lawsuit, the identified companies violated federal law when they failed to hire a Haitian applicant for the position of nursing home administrator on the basis of her national origin. The Haitian applicant’s job offer was revoked shortly after meeting with the owner and manager of the nursing home who made discriminatory comments about “voodoo” and other “Haitian rituals.” He claimed the applicant would favor Haitian employees, and relayed a story about a former administrator finding a voodoo doll outside her office after disciplining a Haitian employee.

Such alleged conduct violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits

discrimination based on national origin. The EEOC filed its lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida, Orlando Division (EEOC v. Hobe Sound OPCO et al., Civil Action No. 6:23-cv-01078) after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process.

The three-year consent decree resolving the EEOC's lawsuit has been approved by the federal court. In addition to monetary relief, any time the companies operate a nursing home they are required to adopt and distribute a policy prohibiting national origin discrimination and will post a notice to employees regarding the lawsuit. The decree also requires the companies to provide specialized training to managers and employees to ensure that employees are aware of their rights and complaint procedures. The decree also mandates that the companies provide EEOC with reports of any complaints of national origin discrimination and describe its actions taken in response to the complaint.

“This case illustrates that national origin discrimination continues to be a barrier for Haitian applicants seeking employment at all levels,” said Kristen Foslid, acting regional attorney in the EEOC's Miami Office. “Job applicants deserve to advance as far as their talents and abilities take them—including in senior management positions—without having stereotypes forced upon them.”

Miami Office Director Evangeline Hawthorne said, “Compliance with the law is not optional. The EEOC will not tolerate businesses that discriminate against anyone because of their national origin, or any other illegal reason.”

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

The Miami District Office's jurisdiction includes Florida, Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands.

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 \(https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USEEOC/subscriber/new\)](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USEEOC/subscriber/new).

Recent Press Releases from the Miami District Office

[United Parcel Service to Pay \\$150,000 to Settle EEOC Disability Discrimination Lawsuit \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/united-parcel-service-pay-150000-settle-eeoc-disability-discrimination-lawsuit\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/united-parcel-service-pay-150000-settle-eeoc-disability-discrimination-lawsuit)

[EEOC Sues Florida Care Assisted Living Facility for Pregnancy Discrimination \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-florida-care-assisted-living-facility-pregnancy-discrimination\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-florida-care-assisted-living-facility-pregnancy-discrimination)

[EEOC Sues Waste Pro of Florida for Race Harassment and Retaliation \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-waste-pro-florida-race-harassment-and-retaliation\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-waste-pro-florida-race-harassment-and-retaliation)

Recent Press Releases on the Subject of Race, National Origin

[Schuff Steel Company to Pay \\$500,000 to Settle EEOC Race and National Origin Lawsuit \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/schuff-steel-company-pay-500000-settle-eeoc-race-and-national-origin-lawsuit\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/schuff-steel-company-pay-500000-settle-eeoc-race-and-national-origin-lawsuit)

[EEOC Sues Restaurant Chain for National Origin Discrimination \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-restaurant-chain-national-origin-discrimination\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-restaurant-chain-national-origin-discrimination)

[La EEOC Demanda a Cadena de Restaurantes por Discriminación por Origen Nacional \(https://www.eeoc.gov/es/newsroom/la-eeoc-demanda-cadena-de-restaurantes-por-discriminacion-por-origen-nacional\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/es/newsroom/la-eeoc-demanda-cadena-de-restaurantes-por-discriminacion-por-origen-nacional)