



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Press Release

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EEOC Sues Ohio Nursing and Rehabilitation Facility for Age, Sex Discrimination

Federal Agency Charges The Laurels of Athens Discriminated Against Employee Because of His Age and Sex

CLEVELAND – The Laurels of Athens, a nursing and rehabilitation facility in Athens, Ohio, violated federal civil rights laws by discriminating against a physical therapy assistant because of his age and sex and then retaliating against him for complaining about discrimination, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) alleged in a lawsuit it announced today.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, when he was fired in 2020, the former physical therapy assistant was 59 years old and a few months away from his 60th birthday. The suit claimed that when the employee tried to return from approved medical leave, The Laurels of Athens fired him and claimed there was no work available even though there was physical therapy assistant work available and it was offered to others. The company also refused to rehire the employee after he filed a charge of discrimination, according to the lawsuit.

Such alleged conduct violates the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), which prohibits age discrimination, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits sex discrimination. Both statutes prohibit employers from engaging

in unlawful retaliation. The EEOC filed suit in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio (*EEOC v. Laurel Health Care Company, et al.*, Case No. 2:23-cv-03159), after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its administrative conciliation process.

“The EEOC is committed to remedying discrimination because of sex and age,” said Philadelphia District Office Regional Attorney Debra Lawrence. “Furthermore, employers who retaliate against workers who complain about discrimination must be held accountable.”

The lawsuit was filed by the EEOC’s Philadelphia District Office, which has jurisdiction over Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, and parts of New Jersey and Ohio. Attorneys in the Philadelphia District Office also prosecute discrimination cases in Washington, D.C. and parts of Virginia.

The Laurels of Athens is owned and operated by Laurel Health Care Company, Athens LTC, Inc., Ciena Healthcare Management, Inc., and Ciena Group, LLC.

For more information on age discrimination, please visit <https://www.eeoc.gov/age-discrimination> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/age-discrimination>). More information on sex discrimination and retaliation is available at <https://www.eeoc.gov/sex-based-discrimination> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/sex-based-discrimination>) and <https://www.eeoc.gov/retaliation> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/retaliation>).

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) (<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USEEOC/subscriber/new>).