



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Press Release

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Passages Family Support to Pay \$95,000 to Resolve Religious Discrimination Charge

EEOC Investigation Finds Clinic Refused to Provide Reasonable Accommodation and Discharged Employee Because of Religious Beliefs

SEATTLE – Passages Family Support, a non-profit organization with a clinic in Spokane, Washington, has agreed to pay \$95,000 and provide other injunctive relief following an investigation by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the agency announced today.

A former employee who worked as a mental health therapist alleged that she requested a job-related accommodation for a religious belief that conflicted with a stated requirement of her position. The EEOC's investigation found that, despite a reasonable accommodation being available, Passages Family Support refused to provide it, and ultimately terminated the therapist's employment. Such alleged conduct is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on religion and requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations related to sincerely held religious beliefs and practices.

Following the investigation, the parties engaged in the pre-litigation conciliation

process which resulted in a settlement, requiring Passages Family Support to pay monetary damages to their former employee, create a procedure for applicants and employees to request a religious accommodation, implement mandatory training for management and Human Resources staff, and conduct training to inform non-supervisory employees of their rights.

“Providing reasonable accommodations for employees based on their religious beliefs is not optional,” said Elizabeth M. Cannon, director of the EEOC’s Seattle Field Office. “An accommodation that allows an employee to perform their functions and causes no undue hardship is reasonable, and therefore must be provided. We appreciate Passages Family Support for participating in the conciliation process and taking steps to protect current and future employees from discrimination.”

For information about religious discrimination in the workplace, visit <https://www.eeoc.gov/religious-discrimination> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/religious-discrimination#:~:text=Unless%20it%20would%20be%20an%20undue%20hardship%20on,practices%20that%20an%20https://www.eeoc.gov/religious-discrimination20employee%20has%20for%20religious%20reasons.>).

The EEOC’s Seattle Field Office has jurisdiction over Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington.

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 Seattle Field Office

[Seattle Children’s Hospital to Pay \\$125,000 to Settle EEOC Sexual Harassment Charge](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/seattle-childrens-hospital-pay-125000-settle-eeoc-sexual-harassment-charge) (<https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/seattle-childrens-hospital-pay-125000-settle-eeoc-sexual-harassment-charge>)

[Chipotle to Pay \\$400,000 to Settle EEOC Sexual Harassment Lawsuit](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/chipotle-pay-400000-settle-eeoc-sexual-harassment-lawsuit) (<https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/chipotle-pay-400000-settle-eeoc-sexual-harassment-lawsuit>)

[JC Market Thriftway to Pay Over \\$50,000 Following EEOC Investigation \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/jc-market-thriftway-pay-over-50000-following-eeoc-investigation\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/jc-market-thriftway-pay-over-50000-following-eeoc-investigation)

Recent Press Releases on the Subject of Religion

[Quest Diagnostics Settles EEOC Religious Discrimination Suit \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/quest-diagnostics-settles-eeoc-religious-discrimination-suit\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/quest-diagnostics-settles-eeoc-religious-discrimination-suit)

[Blackwell Security Services Will Pay \\$70,000 to Settle EEOC Religious Discrimination Lawsuit \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/blackwell-security-services-will-pay-70000-settle-eeoc-religious-discrimination-lawsuit\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/blackwell-security-services-will-pay-70000-settle-eeoc-religious-discrimination-lawsuit)

[Trinity Health-Michigan to Pay \\$50,000 to Settle EEOC Religious Discrimination Lawsuit \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/trinity-health-michigan-pay-50000-settle-eeoc-religious-discrimination-lawsuit\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/trinity-health-michigan-pay-50000-settle-eeoc-religious-discrimination-lawsuit)