



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Press Release

09-28-2023

Riverwalk Post-Acute Settles EEOC Racial Harassment and Retaliation Lawsuit

Skilled Nursing Facility Allowed Racial Harassment Against Black Employees, Federal Agency Charged

LOS ANGELES – Orange Treeidence OPCO, LLC, doing business as Riverwalk Post-Acute, Providence Group, Inc. (PGI), and Providence Administrative Consulting Services, Inc. (PACS), have agreed to settle a lawsuit filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) alleging racial harassment and retaliation, the federal agency announced today. The settlement includes the payment of \$865,000 to class members and other relief.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, since at least 2018, Riverwalk Post-Acute, a skilled nursing facility in Riverside, California, allowed a class of Black employees to be subjected to racial harassment by residents, co-workers and a supervisor. The harassment included repeated, frequent and offensive race-based remarks and slurs directed at staff. According to the lawsuit, the three defendants operated the facility and failed to adequately respond to multiple complaints of harassment. Instead, employees were told to tolerate the abusive remarks.

Such alleged conduct violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits racial discrimination, including racial harassment, and retaliation. The EEOC filed

suit in U.S. District Court for the Central District of California (EEOC v. Orange Treeidence OPCO, LLC dba Riverwalk Post Acute, et al., Case No. 5:22-cv-00425-JGB-SP).

In addition to monetary relief, the three-year consent decree settling the suit includes injunctive relief aimed at preventing workplace harassment and retaliation. The companies must retain an EEO monitor; review and revise their policies and procedures on discrimination, harassment and retaliation; and create a structure for employees to report discrimination and harassment. The defendants also must provide training on anti-discrimination laws, with an emphasis on racial harassment. The decree will remain under the court's jurisdiction for the three-year term.

“Racial harassment continues to be a problem across industries,” said Anna Park, regional attorney for the EEOC's Los Angeles District Office. “It is important for employers to be proactive in addressing racial harassment. We commend Riverwalk Post-Acute for committing to changes to address racial harassment.”

Christine Park-Gonzales, the EEOC's Los Angeles District director, said, “When employees report harassment in the workplace, the employer must create a safe and retaliation-free environment whereby they take prompt and effective action to investigate and address any harassment. It's important for employers to recognize that they are responsible for creating a harassment-free workplace, regardless of who the harasser is.”

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

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