



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Press Release

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EEOC Sues Third Bench Holdings and Sher-Wood Cabinetry for Retaliation

Millwork and Cabinetry Companies Retaliated Against Three Employees After the Employees Reported Discrimination, Federal Agency Charges

DALLAS – Third Bench Holdings, a millwork and cabinet installations company, and its subsidiary Las Cruces Cabinets LLC d/b/a Sher-Wood Cabinetry, located in Las Cruces, New Mexico, violated federal law by retaliating against three employees after reporting harassment and discriminatory treatment, the federal agency announced today.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, an employee reported a company official for discriminating against her because of her national origin, Hispanic. The human resources director began investigating her claims. As part of the investigation, the human resources director interviewed the reporting employee's husband, also an employee of the company, who corroborated the concerns. A day after the company began the investigation, the employee who raised the initial complaints was demoted and her husband was fired. Shortly thereafter, the human resources director claimed she was also subjected to retaliatory treatment by the same company official who was the subject of the investigation and after she reported the overall concerns to higher management, she was also fired.

Such alleged conduct violates Title VII's of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits employers from retaliating against employees for opposing unlawful behavior or participating in investigations or proceedings. EEOC filed suit, Civil Action No. 2:23-cv-659, in U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process. The EEOC seeks back pay damages, reinstatement, or front pay in lieu thereof, compensatory and punitive damages, and injunctive remedies, including an order prohibiting the employer from engaging in discriminatory or retaliatory treatment in the future.

“Employers are prohibited from punishing their employees for speaking out about what they reasonably believe to be discriminatory treatment,” said Brooke López, trial attorney in the EEOC’s Dallas District Office. “Without these federal protections, workers may not feel safe standing up for themselves.”

“Retaliation claims represent the largest number of all claims raised in EEOC charges filed nationwide,” said Dallas EEOC Regional Attorney Robert Canino. “It is critical employers take complaints seriously and engage in self-examination for possibilities of better communication, clarification, or constructive adjustments, rather than to consider such times as moments of conflict.”

For more information on antiretaliation protections, please visit [**www.eeoc.gov/retaliation \(http://www.eeoc.gov/retaliation\)**](http://www.eeoc.gov/retaliation). For more information on national origin discrimination, visit [**https://www.eeoc.gov/national-origin-discrimination \(https://www.eeoc.gov/national-origin-discrimination\)**](https://www.eeoc.gov/national-origin-discrimination).

EEOC advances opportunity in the workplace by enforcing federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. More information is available at [**www.eeoc.gov \(http://www.eeoc.gov\)**](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).