



**U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**

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**Press Release**

03-15-2024

# **Walgreens Pays \$205,000 in EEOC Pregnancy and Disability Discrimination Lawsuit**

Settles Federal Charges That Alexandria Pharmacy Refused to Allow Pregnant Worker Emergency Medical Leave, Forcing Her to Quit

NEW ORLEANS – Pharmacy and retailer Walgreens Co. has agreed to pay \$205,000 and provide other relief to settle a pregnancy discrimination lawsuit filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency announced today.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, Walgreens violated federal law when one of its stores in Alexandria, Louisiana refused to allow a pregnant employee with impairments to take emergency leave to seek medical attention, forcing her to quit. The pregnant customer sales associate, who had diabetes and hypoglycemia, experienced spotting at work and asked the store manager to allow her to take unscheduled emergency leave to seek medical attention.

Although the store manager and team lead could have covered for her, the store manager nonetheless told the customer sales associate that she could not leave until they found a replacement for her. They were unable to do so. The store

manager told the customer sales associate that she had already asked for too many accommodations. The customer sales associate had no option but to resign so that she could seek immediate medical attention, per her doctor's advice. She miscarried later that day, the EEOC said.

Such alleged conduct violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of pregnancy-related conditions and disability, respectively, and which also prohibit retaliation, including for making a reasonable accommodation request. The EEOC filed suit in U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana (Civil Action No. 22-5357) after first trying to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process. The court approved a consent decree resolving the dispute on March 15, 2024.

The two-year consent decree settling the suit applies to all Walgreens' retail store locations in ten cities, and requires the company to maintain and disseminate policies that prohibit discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, pregnancy-related conditions, and retaliation. The decree ensures that employees are provided copies of the company's anti-discrimination and anti-retaliation policies, and also requires training for employees and supervisors on pregnancy-related discrimination, reasonable accommodations, and the company's anti-discrimination and anti-retaliation policies. The company will also regularly report to the EEOC regarding pregnancy or disability discrimination complaints it receives.

"Employers must ensure that pregnant workers are afforded equal employment opportunities," said Rudy Sustaita, regional attorney for the EEOC's Houston District Office. "Employers must consider an employee's request for reasonable accommodation, including a request for leave, and grant that request when it is not an undue hardship."

Elizabeth Owen, a senior trial attorney in the EEOC's New Orleans Field Office, added, "Miscarriages can be personally devastating. No one should have to choose between getting the pregnancy care they need and losing a job."

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

The EEOC's lawsuit was commenced by the EEOC's New Orleans Field Office, which is part of the Houston District Office, which has jurisdiction over Louisiana and parts of Texas.

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) (<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 New Orleans Field Office

[EEOC Sues Gracious Bakery for Pregnancy Discrimination \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-gracious-bakery-pregnancy-discrimination\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-gracious-bakery-pregnancy-discrimination)

[Affordable Home Furnishings to Pay \\$105,000 to Settle EEOC Race Discrimination Lawsuit \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/affordable-home-furnishings-pay-105000-settle-eeoc-race-discrimination-lawsuit\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/affordable-home-furnishings-pay-105000-settle-eeoc-race-discrimination-lawsuit)

[J&M Industries to Pay \\$105,000 to Settle EEOC Age Discrimination Lawsuit \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/jm-industries-pay-105000-settle-eeoc-age-discrimination-lawsuit\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/jm-industries-pay-105000-settle-eeoc-age-discrimination-lawsuit)

## Recent Press Releases on the Subject of Pregnancy, Race, Retaliation

[Dillard's Pays \\$70,000 in EEOC Lawsuit for Retaliation \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/dillards-pays-70000-eeoc-lawsuit-retaliation\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/dillards-pays-70000-eeoc-lawsuit-retaliation)

[Bako Pays \\$50,000 to Settle EEOC Pregnancy Discrimination Lawsuit \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/bako-pays-50000-settle-eeoc-pregnancy-discrimination-lawsuit\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/bako-pays-50000-settle-eeoc-pregnancy-discrimination-lawsuit)

[EEOC Sues Gracious Bakery for Pregnancy Discrimination \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-gracious-bakery-pregnancy-discrimination\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-gracious-bakery-pregnancy-discrimination)

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