



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Press Release

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Didlake, Inc. Pays More Than \$1 Million in EEOC Disability Discrimination and Retaliation Lawsuit

Nonprofit Denied Accommodations to Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Employees and Fired Employees Who Requested Medical Leave, Federal Agency Charged

WASHINGTON – Didlake, Inc., a government contractor that provides janitorial and maintenance employees to federal worksites throughout Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia, will pay \$1,017,500 and provide programmatic relief to resolve a disability discrimination lawsuit filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency announced today.

According to the lawsuit, Didlake, a nonprofit that employs a significant number of employees with disabilities, failed to provide communications accommodations, including American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, for deaf and hard-of-hearing employees, and it maintained a policy of terminating employees who requested medical leave but did not qualify for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

Such alleged conduct violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations to employees with

disabilities if doing so would not pose an undue hardship. The EEOC filed suit (EEOC v. Didlake, Inc., Case No. 8:23-cv-2618) in U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its administrative conciliation process.

The five-year decree settling the suit includes monetary relief for two employees, and to the estate of a third individual. It also provides monetary relief for two groups of claimants: current and former maintenance and janitorial employees who are deaf or hard of hearing and were denied communications accommodations, and former employees who were terminated because they required medical leave but were not eligible for FMLA leave. In addition to monetary relief, Didlake will also update and supplement its existing policies relating to leave and reasonable accommodations, provide training to its management on the ADA, and educate all employees on how to request reasonable accommodations.

“This litigation is an important reminder that employers must provide effective accommodations to employees who are deaf and hard of hearing,” said Debra M. Lawrence, a regional attorney in the EEOC’s Philadelphia office. “Such accommodations must be provided on an ongoing basis to ensure that these employees can participate in meetings and other workplace communications.”

Mindy Weinstein, director of the EEOC’s Washington Field Office, said, “Under the ADA, medical leave must be provided as a reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities, as long as those accommodations do not cause an undue hardship or expense to the employer. This is true even for employees who are not eligible for leave under the FMLA.”

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

The EEOC’s Washington Field Office has jurisdiction over Washington, D.C., and parts of Virginia. Attorneys in the Philadelphia District Office prosecute discrimination cases within the jurisdiction of the Washington Field Office.

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/](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USEEOC/)

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Recent Press Releases from the Washington Field Office

Joint Statement by Acting Secretary of Labor Su, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Chair Burrows on Anniversary of PWFA, PUMP Act (<https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/joint-statement-acting-secretary-labor-su-us-equal-employment-opportunity-commission-chair>)

Declaraciones del Secretario de Trabajo Interino Su y la Presidenta de la Comisión de Igualdad de Oportunidades en el Empleo de EE. UU., Burrows, por Aniversario de PWFA y Ley PUMP (<https://www.eeoc.gov/es/newsroom/declaraciones-del-secretario-de-trabajo-interino-su-y-la-presidenta-de-la-comision-de>)

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Recent Press Releases on the Subject of Disability

GardaWorld to Pay \$37,500 in EEOC Disability Discrimination Suit (<https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/gardaworld-pay-37500-eeoc-disability-discrimination-suit>)

Pearl Interactive Network to Pay Over \$23,000 for EEOC Disability Discrimination Charge (<https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/pearl-interactive-network-pay-over-23000-eeoc-disability-discrimination-charge>)

Opportunities & Resources, Inc. to Pay \$325,000 in EEOC Disability Discrimination Lawsuit (<https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/opportunities-resources-inc-pay-325000-eeoc-disability-discrimination-lawsuit>)

