



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

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## Press Release

05-23-2024

# Washington State Department of Transportation Settles Disability Discrimination Complaint Filed With EEOC

Federal Agency Investigation Found That Former Employee Was Fired for Disclosing Disability and Potential Need for Accommodation

SEATTLE – The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has agreed to pay \$57,577 in compensatory damages and back pay and provide other injunctive relief following an investigation by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the agency announced today.

In the charge, a former employee alleged that he was terminated five days after disclosing his disability and discussing a potential need for a related accommodation with his employer. The EEOC's investigation found reasonable cause to believe that WSDOT's decision to discharge was motivated by knowledge of the employee's disability and belief he would need future accommodations.

Such alleged conduct is in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), which prohibits discrimination based on a disability and requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations for disabilities.

Following the investigation, the parties engaged in the pre-litigation conciliation process, which resulted in a settlement, requiring WSDOT to pay monetary damages to their former employee; create a procedure for applicants and employees to request accommodations for a disability; implement mandatory training for management and human resources staff; and conduct training to inform non-supervisor employees of their rights.

“The EEOC will rigorously pursue justice on behalf of individuals with disabilities,” said Elizabeth M. Cannon, director of the EEOC’s Seattle Field Office. “Employers who make employment decisions based on stereotypes and assumptions about disabilities are violating the rights of workers and risk enforcement action and potential litigation.”

For information about disability discrimination in the workplace, visit <https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc-disability-related-resources> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc-disability-related-resources>).

The Washington State Department of Transportation is a state governmental agency that stewards transportation systems throughout Washington.

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) (<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

**[Columbia River Healthcare to Settle EEOC Harassment Charge \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/columbia-river-healthcare-settle-eeoc-harassment-charge\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/columbia-river-healthcare-settle-eeoc-harassment-charge)**

**[NorVal Electric to Pay \\$50,000 in EEOC Sexual Harassment and Retaliation Lawsuit \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/norval-electric-pay-50000-eeoc-sexual-harassment-and-retaliation-lawsuit\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/norval-electric-pay-50000-eeoc-sexual-harassment-and-retaliation-lawsuit)**

**[Red Robin Pagará 600.000 Dólares a la EEOC por Demanda por Acoso Sexual \(https://www.eeoc.gov/es/newsroom/red-robin-pagara-600000-dolares-la-eeoc-por-demanda-por-acoso-sexual\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/es/newsroom/red-robin-pagara-600000-dolares-la-eeoc-por-demanda-por-acoso-sexual)**

## **Recent Press Releases on the Subject of Disability**

**[EEOC Sues All Day Medical Care Clinic for Discriminating Against Employee for Not Disclosing Disability During Job Interview \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-all-day-medical-care-clinic-discriminating-against-employee-not-disclosing\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-all-day-medical-care-clinic-discriminating-against-employee-not-disclosing)**

**[The Modern Group and Dragon Rig Sales to Pay \\$35,000 in EEOC Disability Discrimination Lawsuit \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/modern-group-and-dragon-rig-sales-pay-35000-eeoc-disability-discrimination-lawsuit\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/modern-group-and-dragon-rig-sales-pay-35000-eeoc-disability-discrimination-lawsuit)**

**[Tractor Supply Company to Pay \\$75,000 to Settle EEOC Disability Discrimination and Retaliation Lawsuit \(https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/tractor-supply-company-pay-75000-settle-eeoc-disability-discrimination-and-retaliation\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/tractor-supply-company-pay-75000-settle-eeoc-disability-discrimination-and-retaliation)**