



Civil Rights Department

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April 13, 2023
For Immediate Release

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California Civil Rights Department Takes Tesla to Court Over Failure to Comply with Investigative Subpoena Regarding Allegations of Discrimination

SACRAMENTO – The California Civil Rights Department (CRD) today announced taking legal action against Tesla over the company's failure to comply with a subpoena in connection to an ongoing, confidential investigation into allegations of unlawful harassment and discrimination. The action announced today is currently [separate from CRD's ongoing lawsuit](#) filed against Tesla last year and arose out of a different complaint filed with CRD in 2021. In the new legal filing before the Alameda County Superior Court, CRD is seeking a court order to compel Tesla to comply with the state's investigation, running parallel to the state's current lawsuit, into separately filed allegations of employment discrimination impacting a group of Black Tesla workers.

"Tesla's failure to comply with my office's obligation to investigate allegations of workplace misconduct shows a lack of respect for the rights and well-being of their workers," **said CRD Director Kevin Kish**. "Under California law, it is our responsibility to take each and every complaint of civil rights violations seriously—and to follow the facts wherever they lead. The California Civil Rights Department will not accept any attempts to obstruct our investigation. My office is simply seeking to fulfill its statutory duty to investigate allegations of discrimination. Tesla is not above the law."

Under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, CRD has a statutory obligation to review and, as necessary, investigate individual complaints of employment discrimination filed with the department, regardless of whether there may be other existing or pending actions against a company or individual, and may do so on a groupwide basis. CRD is the state agency authorized to enforce state civil rights laws and, in conducting its investigations, CRD is vested with the authority to issue and enforce subpoenas. As part of the investigation, CRD sought to depose an individual who Tesla believes would be knowledgeable of the alleged misconduct and related policies and procedures. However, Tesla failed to adequately respond and, to date, has declined to make an individual available. As a result, CRD is seeking a court order to compel compliance with its investigation into alleged instances of discrimination and harassment involving a group of workers.

A copy of the legal filing is available [here](#).

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CRD is the state agency charged with enforcing California's civil rights laws. Formerly known as the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH), the mission of CRD is to protect the people of California from unlawful discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and state-fund programs and activities, and from hate violence and human trafficking. For more information, visit calcivilrights.ca.gov.

