



Civil Rights Department

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Civil Rights Department Reaches \$375,000 Employment Disability Settlement with San Joaquin County Clerk's Office

San Joaquin County Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk to ensure all managers and human resource personnel have received training on state civil rights laws

SACRAMENTO – The California Civil Rights Department (CRD) today announced reaching a \$375,000 settlement with the San Joaquin County Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk over allegations of disability discrimination. The voluntary mediated settlement resolves allegations that the county unlawfully reprimanded an employee and denied reasonable accommodations and work opportunities as a result of a request for a disability accommodation. As part of the settlement, the county has committed to taking proactive steps to prevent future discrimination and provide direct relief to the individual complainant.

“There is no room for disability discrimination in California,” said **CRD Director Kevin Kish**. “Employers must know their responsibilities under the law and treat people with disabilities with the respect and dignity to which they are entitled. Through this settlement, San Joaquin County is taking the right course of action to correct a wrong. I’m grateful to the complainant who spoke out and brought this matter to our attention. Together, we can continue to fight for a fairer California for all.”

In 2020, CRD received a complaint against the San Joaquin County Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk alleging retaliation and the unlawful denial of reasonable accommodations for the use of orthotic sandals, which were purportedly not in compliance with the office’s dress code. While the county ultimately approved the accommodation, this allegedly only occurred several months after the complainant was given a written reprimand, denied an interactive process for accommodating the disability, and the requirement of additional doctor visits to provide information beyond what was contained in a medical certification that had been submitted.

Under California law, an employer is required to interact with an employee to explore all possible means of reasonably accommodating a person prior to rejecting the person for a job or making any employment-related decision. An accommodation is considered reasonable if it does not impose an undue hardship on the employer’s business. Pursuant to its statutory authority, CRD investigated the complaint and referred the matter to its [Dispute Resolution Division](#) to determine if the parties could reach a voluntary agreement. The division operates within CRD to provide free, neutral mediation

services to help parties resolve disputes and address discrimination complaints filed with CRD. Each year, the division resolves hundreds of complaints, resulting in policy changes and millions of dollars in direct relief to impacted Californians.

As part of the settlement, the San Joaquin County Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk has agreed to:

- Ensure all managers and human resource personnel have received training on state civil rights laws, with a focus on the appropriate response to a request for a disability accommodation.
- Review and certify that the office's current policies for maintaining a workplace free from harassment and discrimination are aligned with state law.
- Post CRD informational materials in a common area to which all employees have access to assist in addressing requests for assistance or reports of discrimination.
- Pay \$375,000 to the complainant.

If you or someone you know has been the victim of discrimination, CRD may be able to assist you through its complaint process. General information about CRD's complaint process and how to file a complaint is available [here](#). General information regarding California's protections against disability discrimination in employment is available [here](#).

The case was mediated by Attorney IV Mediator Angela E. Oh. The matter was also supported by Attorney III Matt Turnbull.

The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors formally approved the compensation package at its meeting today.

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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.

