



## Civil Rights Department

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### State Requires Specialized Bicycle Company to Revamp Human Resources Office

*Settlement resolves alleged failures to document and address discrimination complaints*

**SACRAMENTO** – The California Civil Rights Department (CRD) today announced reaching a settlement with Specialized Bicycle Components, Inc. (Specialized) to resolve alleged failures to appropriately document and address discrimination complaints. Specialized is reportedly one of the largest bicycle manufacturers in the world. As part of the settlement, Specialized will hire an external expert to conduct a thorough review of its employment practices and complaint processes, submit to monitoring by the state, and provide training to human resources staff.

“Specialized is an iconic California brand,” **said CRD Director Kevin Kish.** “But the company is long overdue for an HR process that keeps pace with their commitment to performance. This settlement will help ensure Specialized does the right thing not just for its riders, but also for its workers. Nobody should ever have to worry about workplace complaints disappearing into an HR black hole. I’m proud of the work of our team for getting this settlement done.”

#### **HR Missing in Action**

In 2022, CRD received a complaint against Specialized from a former employee alleging, among other things, that the company retaliated against employees for internally reporting concerns about harassment and discrimination. In the complaint, the former employee said that, after reporting her concerns, she faced a range of forms of retaliation, including not having her contract renewed, being excluded from team meetings, and having other staff told not to speak to her or loop her in on initiatives related to her work.

In response to the complaint, CRD launched an investigation into the alleged violations and issued a director’s complaint in 2024. A director’s complaint is one tool the department uses to help identify and address potential violations on behalf of a group of individuals. As part of the broader investigation, CRD identified other alleged deficiencies at Specialized, including that the company failed to have a consistent process for addressing and tracking employee complaints related to discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.

## Pumping the Brakes

At the conclusion of the department's investigation, CRD provided Specialized an opportunity to resolve the allegations through mediation. As a result of the settlement, the company, without admitting liability, will:

- Hire an external expert to conduct a thorough review of the company's employment practices and complaint processes.
- Update its policies and procedures for handling complaints of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation to ensure compliance with California law.
- Provide training to human resources personnel and managers to ensure effective implementation of the company's updated policies.
- Identify and put in place any changes needed to the structure and operations of the human resources office.
- Report to CRD on the implementation status of recommendations made by the external expert and any new employee complaints.
- Pay \$40,000 to cover costs associated with the investigation.

If you or someone you know has experienced employment discrimination, CRD may be able to assist you through its [complaint process](#). The department also [provides general information and factsheets online](#) about civil rights protections, including on [employment discrimination](#) and [retaliation](#).

The settlement announced today was secured by Staff Counsel Irene Meyers, Senior Staff Counsel Matthew Turnbull, Senior Staff Counsel Mackenzie Anderson, and Assistant Chief Counsel Asaf Orr. It was mediated by Attorney IV Mediator Angela E. Oh.

You can learn more by [reading a copy of the settlement](#).

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*The California Civil Rights Department (CRD) is the state agency charged with enforcing California's civil rights laws. CRD's mission is to protect the people of California from unlawful discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and state-funded programs and activities, and from hate violence and human trafficking. For more information, visit [calcivilrights.ca.gov](http://calcivilrights.ca.gov).*

