



Civil Rights Department

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Vallejo Unified Agrees to \$150K Settlement Over Employee Telework Denial

Settlement resolves disability discrimination complaint

SACRAMENTO – The California Civil Rights Department (CRD) today announced a settlement with the Vallejo City Unified School District to resolve an employee's complaint of disability discrimination related to the effective denial of a request for telework as a reasonable accommodation. As part of the settlement, the school district will pay \$150,000 in compensation, grant the employee's telework request, and take other steps to protect the rights of district employees in the future.

"When someone asks for an accommodation, employers have to pay attention," **said CRD Director Kevin Kish**. "That's a threshold requirement of California's employment disability protections. Every worker is entitled to a meaningful opportunity to discuss with their employer ways to help them stay on the job regardless of disability. As a result of this settlement, staff at the Vallejo City Unified School District can now expect that their accommodation requests will be heard."

Ignored Is Denied

Last year, CRD received a complaint against the Vallejo City Unified School District from an employee who alleged that the school district failed to consider their request for telework as an accommodation for a disability. According to the complaint, the school district simply ignored the request, effectively denying it. This allegedly happened even though the employee submitted a doctor's note and made multiple attempts to have their request be considered. The worker also said that they had previously been permitted to work remotely and that their position did not require them to interact with students in person. Under California law, employers are required to engage in good faith with employees with disabilities on reasonable requests for changes to employment policies or practices that can enable them to keep working.

Seat at the Table

After conducting an initial investigation, CRD provided the employee and the school district an opportunity to voluntarily resolve the allegations through mediation. The department's neutral mediators help resolve hundreds of cases every year, bringing millions of dollars in relief to people across California. As a result of the settlement, the district, without admitting wrongdoing, will:

- Conduct a comprehensive review of its policies for addressing reasonable accommodations.
- Update its reasonable accommodation policies as needed to ensure compliance with state law and share any changes with all district employees.
- Provide training to human resources staff on reasonable accommodation requests and the interactive process.
- Grant the employee's telework request and, as appropriate, reinstate any sick leave used.
- Pay \$150,000 in compensation to cover the alleged harms.

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 [reasonable accommodations in the workplace](#).

The settlement announced today was mediated by Attorney Mediator Shira Harris.

You can learn more by [reading 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.

