

**DEPARTMENT OF FAIR EMPLOYMENT & HOUSING**

2218 Kausen Drive, Suite 100 | Elk Grove | CA | 95758
800-884-1684 (voice) | 800-700-2320 (TTY) | California's Relay Service at 711
www.dfeh.ca.gov | email: contact.center@dfeh.ca.gov

DIRECTOR KEVIN KISH

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Contact: Fahizah Alim
(916) 585-7076
Fahizah.Alim@dfeh.ca.gov

**DFEH SETTLES SEXUAL HARASSMENT CLAIM AGAINST
KERN COUNTY JOB TRAINING PROGRAM FOR \$95,000**

SACRAMENTO – The California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) has settled a complaint for \$95,000 with an organization that provides job training skills in rural Kern County to people with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

The names and exact location of the parties have been kept confidential to protect the privacy of the complainant, who is a young adult with cognitive disabilities.

DFEH's investigation revealed that a young female client of the job training program had been sexually assaulted multiple times by her job coach and supervisor. After she complained about the assault, she was terminated from the program. This program is funded by the state to provide job skills and training to people with disabilities to help them live and work independently in the community.

"Everyone in California is entitled to work in a workplace free from discrimination and not be subjected to sexual or other forms of harassment," said DFEH Director Kevin Kish. "DFEH is committed to advancing and protecting the civil rights of persons with disabilities who are working in programs that develop independent job skills and in all other employment settings.

DFEH, Disability Rights California, who represented the young woman and her legal guardian, the job training agency and the individual harasser all participated in a mandatory mediation conducted by DFEH's Dispute Resolution Division, in advance of any litigation.

The agency will pay \$85,000 to the former client for lost wages and emotional support damages, and \$15,000 in attorney's fees to Disability Rights California.

The agency terminated the supervisor/job coach, who has undergone sensitivity training as part of the settlement. The owners, managers, all supervisors including job coaches and job coach supervisors at the agency will also undergo training, restructure how it provides services to its clients with disabilities, revise its policies and report any complaints to DFEH for three years. Most significantly, as part of the settlement, the young woman will return to the job training program. She is eager to return to work.

The young woman's guardian complained to DFEH after her niece was terminated from the job training program. She was upset that the harasser kept his job and her niece was fired after complaining. DFEH has authority to investigate and prosecute complaints of harassment or discrimination on behalf of program participants in nonprofit sheltered workshop, day program, or rehabilitation facility pursuant to new authority granted in AB488 (2016).

The DFEH is the state agency charged with enforcing California's civil rights laws. The mission of the DFEH is to protect the people of California from unlawful discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations and from hate violence and human trafficking. For more information, visit the Department's Web site at www.dfeh.ca.gov.