Des Moines Civil & Human Rights Commission Settles Racial Discrimination Complaint for $10,000

Employer Agrees to Pay $10,000 to Former Employee for Failing to Follow Disciplinary Procedures and Racial Stereotyping.

DES MOINES, IA – The Des Moines Civil and Human Rights Commission announced today that it has reached a conciliation agreement with an employer in Des Moines, Iowa, settling allegations that an employee of African descent was discriminated against by the employer who took actions leading up to and including termination based on perceived racial stereotyping.

The Des Moines Human Rights Ordinance prohibits discrimination because of race and color, including racial stereotyping.

“This case demonstrates that racial discrimination still takes place and manifests in numerous ways, including stereotyping that results in a skewed perception of an employee’s actions,” said Joshua V. Barr, Director of the Des Moines Civil & Human Rights Commission. “Persons who feel like they are being treated differently because of the color of their skin or ethnic background need to reach out to the Civil and Human Rights Commission.”

The agreement is the result of a complaint that was filed by an employee in Des Moines who worked with youth. There was a change in leadership and the employee’s new boss took actions resulting in the employee’s termination. The actions taken not only violated the protocol for addressing disciplinary issues, but were informed by a lack of awareness of the culture and racial stereotyping that formed the basis for termination. The Des Moines Civil and Human Rights Commission successfully conciliated the matter.

Under the terms of the agreement, the employer will pay the former employee $10,000 and the employer has agreed to undergo civil rights training regarding racial discrimination.

Any person who believes they have experienced discrimination may file a complaint by contacting the Des Moines Civil and Human Rights Commission at (515) 283-4284 or humanrights@dmgov.org. Discrimination complaints may also be filed online.

*The Des Moines Civil & Human Rights Commission works to foster justice and equality for all people who live or visit Des Moines by creating an atmosphere of opportunity regardless of: race, color, creed, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, physical and mental disability or family status. More information is available at www.HumanRightsDSM.org.*