

Discrimination: Minority Nurse Paid Less, EEOC Gets Settlement.

Soon after being hired at a rehab facility an African American staff nurse was asked by the executive director of the facility to accept the position of interim director of nursing when the current director of nursing gave notice she was retiring.

A minority nurse was promoted from staff nurse to interim director of nursing, but her salary was \$10,000 less than the non-minority director of nursing who was retiring.

The assistant director, also a non-minority, made \$2,000 more than she did.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
LOUISIANA

October 27, 2009

The minority nurse complained to management several months later when she learned about the salary discrepancies. She was fired the very next day.

She filed a charge of race discrimination with the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

The nurse's supervisor while she was a staff nurse took her side, telling investigators she interacted well with patients and family members, contrary to the reasons given by management for terminating her.

The EEOC obtained a settlement for the minority nurse. The facility paid her \$22,500 to settle the wage disparity issue and agreed to provide favorable references to prospective future employers.

The facility also expressly agreed it would refrain from discriminating against other minority employees and would not retaliate against anyone who complained about discrimination.

The judge in the US District Court for the Western District of Louisiana issued a consent decree approving the settlement. ***EEOC v. Bernice Nursing & Rehab, 2009 WL 6528659 (W.D. La., October 27, 2009).***