

JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, December 12, 2018

Justice Department Settles Immigration-Related Discrimination Claim Against Customer Service Provider in Arizona

The Justice Department announced today that it has reached a settlement with Afni Inc. (Afni), a customer service provider headquartered in Bloomington, Illinois. The settlement resolves a complaint that an Afni location in Tucson, Arizona, discriminated against a lawful permanent resident in violation of the anti-discrimination provision of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA).

The Department's investigation, initiated based on a lawful permanent resident's complaint, concluded that on more than one occasion Afni improperly rejected the worker's valid documents establishing her work authority, and requested that the worker present more or different documents than necessary based on the worker's citizenship status. These actions constitute unfair documentary practices in violation of the INA. Under the INA, workers are allowed to choose from lists of acceptable documents to prove that they are authorized to work and employers cannot reject valid documents or specify which documents the workers should present because of their citizenship.

Under the settlement agreement, Afni will provide back pay to the injured worker and pay a civil penalty to the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Among other requirements, the company will be subject to staff training and monitoring requirements.

"Employers should familiarize themselves with the INA's anti-discrimination requirements to avoid unnecessary and unlawful document requests that create obstacles for workers based on their citizenship status or national origin," said Assistant Attorney General Eric Dreiband of the Civil Rights Division. "We commend Afni for working to ensure that, in the future, employees do not face discriminatory barriers when going through the employment eligibility verification process."

The Division's Immigrant and Employee Rights Section (IER) is responsible for enforcing the anti-discrimination provision of the INA. Among other things, the statute prohibits citizenship status and national origin discrimination in hiring, firing, or recruitment or referral for a fee; unfair documentary practices; retaliation and intimidation.

For more information about protections against employment discrimination under immigration laws, call IER's worker hotline at 1-800-255-7688 (1-800-237-2515, TTY for hearing impaired); call IER's employer hotline at 1-800-255-8155 (1-800-237-2515, TTY for hearing impaired); sign up for a free webinar; email IER@usdoj.gov; or visit IER's English and Spanish websites.

Applicants or employees who believe they were subjected to retaliation; different documentary requirements based on their citizenship, immigration status or national origin; or discrimination based on their citizenship, immigration status, or national origin in hiring, firing, or recruitment or referral for a fee, should contact IER's worker hotline for assistance.

Attachment(s):

[Download afni_settlement_agreement_final_redacted.pdf](#)

Topic(s):

Civil Rights

Component(s):

Civil Rights Division

Civil Rights - Immigrant and Employee Rights Section

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