

Lawsuit Accuses Google of Systemic Bias Against Black Employees

Plaintiff hired as a diversity recruiter alleges years of mistreatment based on race and gender prior to wrongful termination. by Nadia El-Yaouti

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, April 12, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A complaint filed in federal court in San Jose, California, accuses tech giant Google of systemic bias against Black employees. The case is *Curley v Google LLC*, case no. 22-01735. Attorneys for the plaintiff listed in the complaint include Ben Crump of Ben Crump Law, PLLC, Sam Sani of Sani Law, APC, and Suzanne E. Bish, George Robot, and Daniel Lewin of Stowell & Friedman Ltd.

The lawsuit was filed by former employee April Curley. The complaint details that Curley, who is a Black woman, was hired on for an entry-level position despite having over five years of experience and holding a Master's degree. Additionally, Curley alleges that in the six years she spent at Google, she was consistently passed over for job promotions until she was eventually wrongfully terminated in September 2020.

Curley was hired on as a diversity recruiter and focused on the company's diversity image by seeking and recruiting talent from historically black colleges and universities. According to Curley, this role, which was aimed at widening the scope of the company's diversity inclusion, was actually a carefully crafted public relations move. Curley shared, "I felt compelled to be vocal about the racist behaviors, policies, and practices that are deeply seeded in the problematic layers of Google's diversity recruitment efforts and the treatment of Black Googlers." Curley recounts being characterized by other workers as an "angry" Black woman and being denigrated for her work.

Prominent civil rights attorney Ben Crump is representing Curley and shares that the former recruiter "was an exceptional employee at Google" who was hired into a position that was well below her qualifications. He goes on to emphasize Curley's claims, stating, "While Google claims that they were looking to increase diversity, they were actually undervaluing, underpaying, and



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mistreating their Black employees, leading to high turnover. We will not stop until we get justice for Curley and other Black employees at Google, and until we see real change in this company's culture.”

According to the complaint, the company has a “racially biased corporate culture.” The complaint details that the company’s leadership and tech workforce is about 2.3% Black workers, and just over 4% of employees at Google

are black. According to Google's 2021 diversity report, 8.8% of new hires were Black that year.

[California employment law attorney Richard Koss](#), who is not involved in the case, describes what Curley must prove to be successful in her discrimination case. “As with most discrimination cases alleging disparate treatment, employees have the burden of proof,” Koss explains. “They must prove by a preponderance of the evidence, or more than 50% of the weight of the evidence, that they were performing their work competently; they suffered an adverse employment action; and they were treated differently than people who were not their same race.”

Curley is not the first employee to bring forward complaints of this kind. Timnit Gebru, an AI researcher and ethicist, also complained about the company’s diversity efforts. In 2020, Gebru was fired from the company after refusing to take her name off of a research paper. She later shared her frustration in an internal memo.

Curley’s lawsuits come at the heels of brewing labor practice complaints. There have been numerous reports that the California Department of Fair Housing and Employment has been interviewing Black women who work at Google, signaling a possible investigation into the company’s labor practices.

Crump details that the complaint is in the works of being filed as a class-action suit. As part of Curley’s lawsuit, plaintiffs are seeking to be restored to their positions at their appropriate salary and are also seeking compensatory and punitive damages and lost compensation for current and former Black employees at Google.

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