

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

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EEOC FILES DISCRIMINATION SUIT AGAINST SARA LEE KNIT PRODUCTS, INC.

CHARLOTTE, NC - The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission announced today that it filed a racial harassment lawsuit against Sara Lee Knit Products, Inc. The suit alleges that Sara Lee Knit Products subjected a former employee, Jeffery C. Hemphill, to a racially hostile work environment.

According to the complaint filed in the United States District Court for the Western District of North Carolina, Shelby Division, Sara Lee violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 when it subjected Hemphill to harassment based on race at its Forest City facility. The racial harassment included racially derogatory comments, name-calling, jokes and graffiti by co-workers and at least one supervisor.

Reuben Daniels, Acting Director of EEOC's Charlotte District Office, said: "EEOC has filed a number of cases challenging racial harassment this week throughout the district and we will continue to focus on suing employers who fail to take action to provide a workplace free from such harassment."

The EEOC seeks back pay, and compensatory and punitive damages, as well as injunctive relief prohibiting Sara Lee from engaging in employment practices which discriminate against African-American employees.

The EEOC enforces Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; the Equal Pay Act; prohibitions against discrimination affecting individuals with disabilities in the federal sector; sections of the Civil Rights Act of 1991, and Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in the private sector and state and local governments. Further information is available at EEOC's website at www.eeoc.gov.

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