



For Immediate Release
Monday, October 27, 2025

Media Contact:
LDF Media, media@naacpldf.org

LDF Files Amicus Brief in Employment Discrimination Case, Urges Court to Reject Attempts to Undermine Civil Rights Laws

On Friday, the Legal Defense Fund (LDF) filed an amicus brief in *Diemert v. City of Seattle*, an employment discrimination case centering on the correct application of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In the lawsuit, a Seattle employee alleged that Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative, which, among other things, includes workplace policies and employee trainings that discuss concepts like "equity" and "inclusion," created a hostile work environment and led to discrimination against him as a white man.

The appeal comes before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals after a lower court ruled in favor of the City of Seattle, finding that Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative policies and trainings are not discriminatory against white people. The lower court also found that the employee lacked the factual support to make claims of a hostile-work environment and disparate treatment under Title VII. LDF's brief argues that the district court correctly and fairly applied the Title VII standard and asks the Ninth Circuit to affirm the lower court's decision.

"For decades, the courts have allowed employers to fulfill the purpose of civil rights by using anti-harassment and workplace inclusions trainings to remove and address the barriers to a safe and fair environment for all workers," said **Alexsis Johnson, Assistant Counsel at LDF**. "Now, arguments like those raised by the Appellant here seek to turn the Equal Protection Clause and Title VII on their heads and undermine the tools used to remedy and prevent unlawful discrimination. The court must not allow this to happen, and we urge the Ninth Circuit to uphold the district court's opinion in this case."

"Title VII's main purpose is a prophylactic one, and Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative is an example of an employer deploying policies and trainings that center concepts like "equity" and "inclusion" to maintain compliance with statutory antidiscrimination laws," said **Avatara Smith-Carrington, LDF Assistant Counsel**. "We should not punish employers for taking the laudable step of trying to prevent discrimination from happening. We urge the court to reject this employee's arguments, which distort the simple principles of "equity" and "inclusion."

Read the full brief [here](#).

###

Founded in 1940, the [Legal Defense Fund \(LDF\)](#) is the nation's first civil rights law organization. LDF's [Thurgood Marshall Institute](#) is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape

the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Please note that LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights.