

CALIFORNIA DISCRIMINATION CASE



A number of Filipino Americans who worked as hospital employees in the state of California have recently won the discrimination and harassment case that had been ongoing for quite a while. This particular settlement happens to be the biggest for any type of language discrimination case that has ever taken place in the United States and within the healthcare service sector of the country. It also happens to be the biggest settlement ever made by the APALC. The APALC also referred to as the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, along with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in the United States, represented a total of 69 Filipino American hospital workers who were dealing with both discrimination and harassment. These individuals were basically singled out due to an English Only policy that had been set, which was completely unlawful and actually violated both federal laws and state laws. One of the hospitals in the Central Valley area of California, the Delano Regional Medical Center, chose to settle the case made against them. In the settlement, they will now have to pay victims of the discrimination and harassment. The total amount that will be distributed amongst these individuals is nearly \$975,000. The litigation director for the APALC, Laboni Hog, has said, "We believe DRMC enforced an overly restrictive English only policy against its Filipino American employees and created a workplace environment that was hostile toward them." Hog also said, "This settlement will send a strong message to employers that it is illegal to target workers based on their national origin and will hopefully encourage more Asian American and immigrant workers to speak out when their rights are violated, like our brave clients did." The lawsuit originally started two years ago, back in August of 2010, when the EEOC chose to sue the Defendants, the Central California Foundation for Health, due to harassment and discrimination against Filipino Americans and the violation of federal and state laws. The APALC got involved in January of 2011. Although the workforce was generally diverse, allegations were made against the Defendants in which it was stated that only the Filipino American employees had to attend a meeting that was supposedly mandatory. In the meeting, they were told by management that they could not speak their own language in the place of work. They were also threatened to be monitored on video surveillance if they continued to speak in their own language instead of speaking English while they were at work. This is something that was never spoken about to any other employees, aside from the Filipino Americans.