

## EEOC REPORTS RECORD INCREASE IN CHARGES AND MONETARY RELIEF



The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has reported a record number of charges of discrimination in the workplace, as well as a record amount relief acquired through its administrative program and litigation, in the 2011 fiscal year. According to the EEOC, there were 99,947 claims of employment discrimination, with 455.6 million dollars in relief attained. For the second consecutive year, the EEOC resolved more charges than it received: a total of 112,499 resolutions, an increase of over 7,500 from the previous year. There are currently 78,136 pending charges, which is a 10 percent drop in the Commission's inventory, the first time there has been a reduction since 2002. The past three years has seen an increase in relief, with the 2011 fiscal year having a 45 million-dollar jump over 2010. Charges of retaliation represented the majority of claims, holding 37.4 percent with 37,334 charges received by the EEOC. Racial discrimination claims saw a decline this year but still made 35.4 percent with a total of 35,395 charges. The other charges most frequently noted were discrimination based on individuals' sex (28,534), disability (25,742) and age (23,465). The largest increase in relief was from allegations of disability discrimination, moving from 76.1 million dollars in 2010 to 103.4 million dollars for this year, an astounding 35.9 percent bump. Back impairments were cited most often as violating the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), while other charges included orthopedic impairments, depression



and diabetes.

The 2011 year was the first full fiscal year of enforcement for the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, which was implemented to subvert discrimination on the basis of genetic information, such as family medical history. The EEOC received a total of 245 charges of such discrimination, but none of these charges are presently in litigation. "The hard work of our employees, combined with increased investments in training, technology and staffing in 2009 and 2010, and strategic management of existing resources made 2011 a year of extraordinary achievements for the EEOC," said EEOC Chair Jacqueline Berrien in a press release. The EEOC's mediation program, which settles cases before they reach litigation, also saw record highs. There was a five percent increase in resolutions over the 2010 fiscal year, as well as 170,053,021 million dollars in benefits, a 29 million-dollar surge over the prior year. Similarly, 5.4 million people benefited from alterations of employment policies or practices at work. Approximately 540,000 individuals had the opportunity to take part in the Commission's public outreach and education programs. And in the federal sector, where the EEOC's enforcement obligations are not the same, 7,672 requests for hearings were resolved with relief totaling 58 million dollars. There were also 4,510 appeals resolved from final agency determinations. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission enforces Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, which was signed into law in 2008.