Jury Rejects Layoff Discrimination Claims and 6th Circuit Affirms; Summary Judgment Obtained in Similar Case

A hotel sales manager was laid off as part of our national hotel chain client’s post-September 11 reductions in force. She sued in federal court in Ohio, alleging that she was selected for layoff on account of her age and gender. The plaintiff had demanded $2 million to settle the case, and seven other laid off managers from the same division also filed similar claims, each demanding seven-figure settlements. After a seven day trial the jury issued a complete defense verdict.

The plaintiff appealed and the 6th Circuit affirmed. It agreed with the district court’s determination that the sales manager had failed to establish a prima facie case of discriminatory failure to promote. The court also concluded that the lower court had not committed an abuse of discretion in connection with certain evidentiary rulings made during the course of the trial on the manager’s claim of discriminatory termination.

We additionally obtained a summary judgment victory on all counts in a two-plaintiff age, sex, and disability discrimination case brought in federal court in Chicago against the same hotel chain relating to its reduction in force conducted following the events of September 11. The summary judgment win was the culmination of years of contentious litigation in which the plaintiffs had made substantial settlement demands.