



Fisher Phillips Secures Complete Victory for Global Food Manufacturer in New Jersey Employment Discrimination Trial

News
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Fisher Phillips announced today that it successfully secured a directed verdict on behalf of client Corbion (Caravan Ingredients Inc.) in a New Jersey employment discrimination trial. The court granted Defendants' motion for involuntary dismissal and dismissed all of Plaintiff's claims in their entirety with prejudice.

The case, filed in New Jersey Superior Court, involved allegations by a former warehouse employee who claimed he was terminated based on race discrimination and perceived disability discrimination under the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD) and in retaliation for filing a workers' compensation claim. The Plaintiff sought damages and other relief related to his December 2022 termination.

Throughout the trial, Fisher Phillips demonstrated that Corbion's termination decision was based solely on the employee's violation of the company's written safety policies governing Powered Industrial Truck (PIT) operations. The evidence showed the employee engaged in multiple safety infractions, each of which independently required termination under Corbion's disciplinary process designed to protect all warehouse employees.

At the close of Plaintiff's case-in-chief, the court granted Defendants' motion for involuntary dismissal under Rule 4:37-2(b), finding that the plaintiff presented no evidence supporting his discrimination and retaliation claims.

"This victory underscores the importance of maintaining clear, consistently enforced workplace safety policies," said **Sarah Wieselthier**, partner at Fisher Phillips. "The court recognized that Corbion acted appropriately in prioritizing the safety of all its employees."

The case was particularly significant for Corbion as it reinforced the company's ability to enforce legitimate safety standards without fear of unfounded discrimination claims. Workplace safety in warehouse and manufacturing operations involving heavy equipment is paramount, and this decision validates an employer's right to terminate employees who violate critical safety protocols.

"At Corbion, we are deeply committed to maintaining safe workplaces for all our employees and being a responsible member of the New Jersey business community," said **Patrick Stahura**, Corbion's Site Director for its Totowa operations. "We have zero tolerance for safety violations that

put our team members at risk. This outcome affirms that New Jersey law supports employers' efforts to consistently apply their safety policies."

The Fisher Phillips trial team included New Jersey partner **Sarah Wieselthier**, and Boston partner **Joseph P. Mendes**, who collectively brought extensive experience in employment litigation and workplace safety matters. **Eliza L. Lloyd** assisted the team with trial preparation.

Fisher Phillips' Litigation practice spans the firm's footprint with a team of litigators based in offices across the U.S., Mexico, and Japan who assist clients with matters ranging from class and collective actions, to non-compete litigation, single-plaintiff discrimination or harassment cases. Because of the firm's global footprint along with its breadth and depth of experience, Fisher Phillips can represent employers in any federal or state court across the country, as well as before any administrative agency or commission where a claim has been brought. By serving as a true business partner to clients, the firm's Litigation practice provides creative, cost-effective, and innovative tactics to help corporate counsel with litigation.

About Fisher Phillips (www.fisherphillips.com)

With over 800 attorneys across the United States, Mexico and Japan, and a vast network of attorneys in jurisdictions around the globe, Fisher Phillips advises and advocates for employers on an international scale. Through our technology-driven approach, we partner with companies to achieve their business objectives, anticipate potential disruption, and provide the legal guidance to navigate and resolve the workplace matters critical to their success.

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