

Two Washington women file harassment, discrimination lawsuits against Amazon

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Both women allege they were racially discriminated against and harassed by their superiors.

EVERETT, Wash. — Two women in Washington state filed separate harassment and discrimination lawsuits against Amazon Wednesday. Both women allege they were racially discriminated against and faced retaliation after reporting their complaints to the company.

Both women are being represented by Wigdor LLP, an employment law firm based out of New York City.

Diana Cuervo, 40, was a manager at an Amazon facility in Everett. Cuervo sought legal counsel after she was "unlawfully terminated" by the company, according to a lawsuit filed in a Washington district court. Cuervo alleges her supervising manager made several racist comments toward her because she is Colombian, including "How is a Latin like you working here?" and "Latin people suck," according to the complaint.

Cuervo alleges she was unlawfully fired after reporting racial discrimination and harassment to HR, and escalating a complaint about a gas leak at the facility that hadn't been addressed, according to the complaint. When Cuervo asked why she was being fired, neither of the supervisors present or the HR representative could give her a specific reason, according to the lawsuit.

Amazon demanded repayment of a \$20,000 signing bonus and relocation fees Cuervo was reimbursed for upon moving from Brooklyn to Everett for the job, according to the suit.

Pearl Thomas, 64, is a Black Human Resources employee for Amazon in Washington state. Thomas is also suing the company for harassment, discrimination and retaliation after reporting her concerns to the company.

In a lawsuit, Thomas alleges she encountered "the worst abuse and displays of racial discrimination" she ever faced during her time at Amazon. She alleges her direct supervisor called her the n-word after he seemingly thought she had hung up on a call, according to the lawsuit. The call was to complain about racist behavior from another employee, according to the complaint.

Thomas was placed into the company's performance improvement process shortly after making complaints to her superiors, according to the lawsuit. She also alleges her "HR for HR" representative tried to dismiss her complaints by telling her she was emotional because of news about the trial of Derek Chauvin.

Both women are suing for damages which will be determined at trial.

An Amazon spokesperson told KING 5 the company conducted investigations in both cases and "found no evidence to support the allegations."

"Amazon works hard to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture. We do not tolerate discrimination or harassment in any form, and employees are encouraged to raise concerns to any member of management or through an anonymous ethics hotline with no risk of retaliation," a spokesperson said.

Wigdorf LLP is also representing three other women from around the country in harassment and discrimination lawsuits against Amazon.