

09/16/2020

Director Joel Davis
WRALTV 5
2619 Western Blvd.
Raleigh, NC 27606

Re: Requesting Emelia- Cowan Taylor return to original position on WRAL-TV and receive full compensation for being laid off on August 07, 2020.

Dear Joel Davis,

Emelia Cowan-Taylor was fired on 07 August 2020 for testing positive for COVID-19. She has been on air 13-years and throughout her employment with this organization, she has observed discrimination at WRAL. This is concerning in light of the high turn-over of Black women and people-of-color that have been laid off by WRAL, while white personnel have been able to be reprimanded according to the policies within the workplace. Most people who are of color have experienced discrimination because of the current racial disparities during the pandemic. Emelia has been a great asset to WRAL as the "Lottery Lady". Nonetheless, she has experienced the harsh effects by being racially profiled at this specific news station. Many people believe the myth of COVID-19 only affecting African-Americans because of their disadvantage of having access to diagnostic testing. Being discriminated upon because of misinformation, shows that there are still racial disparities in the workforce.

On April 1, 2020, the U.S. Department of Labor announced new action regarding how American workers and employers will benefit from the protections and relief offered by the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act and Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act, both part of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). The Department's Wage and Hour Division (WHD) posted a temporary rule issuing regulations pursuant to this new law, effective April 1, 2020.

Emelia went to get tested, she tested positive and was fired without warning or cause. Yes, we understand that North Carolina is an "at will" state for firing personnel working for the betterment of the community. However, Emelia was terminated in direct correlation to COVID-19. Because of the manner and timing of Emelia's release from WRAL, the procedures and policies are in question. Did WRAL follow the CDC guidelines outlined for the Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for anyone having flu-like symptoms before testing positive? Was the Department of Labor's (Department) Wage and Hour Division (WHD) administers new law's properly deployed? Emelia has been a great asset to WRAL. Why should the audience lose

Emelia because of COVID-19? Was she singled out because of her positive results? Were other personnel/employees fired or sent home, for showing signs of possible illness?

We question the validity of her termination and we will continue to stand in solidarity with Emelia Cowan-Taylor, for justice. Thank you, please feel free to contact us.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/critical-workers-implementing-safety-practices.pdf>

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic>

Kathy Gregg- President Fayetteville Police Accountability Community Taskforce

La'Meshia Whittington-Advance Carolina

Cherma Brown-Founder of Butterflies and Pearls, Mental Aid Connect

Attorney Dawn Blagrove- Executive Director of Emancipate NC

Kerwin Pittman- Executive Director of RREPS

Dr. Kimberly Muktatarian- President of Save our Sons Raleigh



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