



Fire Department (“SAFD”), and all relevant events occurred in Bexar County, within this Court’s jurisdiction.

2. Defendant, The City of San Antonio, by and through its agent, the San Antonio Fire Department, is a governmental entity operating within the State of Texas in the Western District of Texas. Defendant may be served by serving the City Clerk, Debbie Racca-Sittre, at City Tower, 100 W. Houston Street, Concourse, San Antonio, Texas 78205.

## **II.**

### **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

3. This Court has jurisdiction to hear the merits of Plaintiff’s federal claims under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1331.

4. Venue is proper in this Court under 28 U.S.C. §1391(b), as all acts alleged herein occurred in San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas, which lies within the Western District of Texas, San Antonio Division.

## **III.**

### **MISNOMER / MISIDENTIFICATION**

5. In the event any parties are misnamed or not included herein, it is Plaintiff’s contention that such was a misidentification or misnomer and/or such parties were “alter egos” of parties named herein. Plaintiff requests that such “corporate veils” should be pierced to hold such parties properly included in the interest of justice.

IV.

**RESPONDEAT SUPERIOR**

6. Employees and agents of Defendant involved in this cause of action were, at all relevant times, employees of Defendant were always acting within the course and scope of their employment with Defendant. Accordingly, Defendant is liable for their conduct under the doctrine of *Respondeat Superior*.

V.

**FACTS**

7. Plaintiff Stephanie Lopez has been an employee of the San Antonio Fire Department since November 2005, working as a firefighter and paramedic. Plaintiff believes and therefore alleges that Defendant receives federal funds and that she works for Defendant in a program that receives federal funds.

8. Lopez was eventually promoted to the position of Fire Engineer and was working on an SAFD ambulance in San Antonio.

9. During the COVID- 19 pandemic, Plaintiff served as a frontline firefighter and paramedic treating critically ill patients and, as a direct result of this occupational exposure, was diagnosed on or about August 5, 2022, with COVID- 19 contracted in the course and scope of her employment with the San Antonio Fire Department—an occupational disease recognized under Texas workers' compensation law.

10. The resulting Long COVID symptoms and post-viral complications developed as conditions naturally flowing from her acute, work-related COVID-19 infection and have since caused substantial limitations in major life activities including breathing, concentration, and stamina.

11. On or about October 25, 2024, Defendant, acting through a high-ranking Chief and two armed Arson Investigators—each serving as Plaintiff's coworkers within the San Antonio Fire Department—dispatched these uniformed personnel to Plaintiff's private residence to hand-deliver work-related and workers' compensation documents containing confidential medical and employment information.

12. Plaintiff was on medical restriction at the time, and the in-person visit occurred while she was recovering from a documented work-related illness.

13. The use of armed investigators to deliver administrative paperwork was extraordinary, coercive, without legitimate business necessity and not a standard employment practice as the same materials were later transmitted electronically.

14. Defendant's deliberate choice to deploy armed personnel to personally deliver confidential documents to a medically restricted employee (Plaintiff's) home constituted an act of intimidation, humiliation, and retaliation intended to discourage her from asserting her rights under federal disability and anti-retaliation laws.

15. This armed visit caused Plaintiff fear, humiliation, and distress, particularly as it was carried out in front of her minor children and neighbors and constituted intimidatory conduct.

16. Defendant's actions were motivated by discriminatory animus based on disability (Long COVID), sex (female and single parent), and retaliation for requesting workers' compensation benefits and reasonable accommodation.

17. After October 25, 2024, Plaintiff faced additional retaliatory acts, including threats of forced resignation, withdrawal of light-duty assignment, and conflicting medical directives, preventing compliance without risking disciplinary consequences. Plaintiff continually experienced emotional and physical harm as a result of Defendant's actions.

## **VI.**

### **TITLE VII SEX DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION**

18. The evidence will show that:

- A. Plaintiff is a member of a protected class based on sex (female) and also belongs to a subclass of women who are primary caregivers and single mothers—characteristics historically used as pretexts for disparate treatment under Title VII's sex-plus doctrine
- B. Plaintiff is qualified for her position
- C. Plaintiff was subjected to adverse employment actions and harassment, including but not limited to intimidation at her home by armed coworkers, threats of forfeiture of employment benefits, withdrawal of light-duty accommodations, and disparate disciplinary treatment. These actions occurred shortly after

Plaintiff engaged in protected activity by requesting workplace accommodation, reporting discrimination, and maintaining a workers' compensation claim

D. The use of this tactic has been unprecedented in the history of the San Antonio Fire Department, and Plaintiff remains the only female employee known to have been subjected to such an encounter

E. Defendant's conduct created a hostile and intimidating and retaliatory work environment that unreasonably interfered with Plaintiff's work performance and terms of employment. The harassment was severe and pervasive, physically threatening, and humiliating, meeting the standard under *Harris v. Forklift Systems, Inc.*, 510 U.S. 17 (1993). Defendant's actions constitute sex discrimination and retaliation in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000e-2(a) and §2000e-3(a).

## VII.

### **DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION UNDER THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) AND THE TEXAS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

19. Plaintiff is a qualified individual with a disability as defined by the ADA and within the meaning of 42 U.S.C. §12102(2), because Long COVID materially limits one or more major life activities, including breathing, concentrating, thinking, communicating, sleeping, walking, working and has affected major bodily functions such as the operation of the respiratory system, neurological system (brain function), immune system, and circulatory system.

20. Defendant had actual knowledge of Plaintiff's documented work-related medical condition, its effect on her ability to perform major life activities, and her medically verified restrictions, yet acted with indifference and hostility toward her condition by engaging in intimidation and adverse employment measures.

21. The evidence will show that Defendant's conduct constitutes unlawful discrimination and harassment, including:

A. Disparate Treatment: Plaintiff suffered adverse employment actions and was treated less favorably in the terms, conditions, and privileges of employment than similarly situated employees.

B. Hostile Work Environment: Plaintiff was subjected to unwelcome harassment based on her disability, which was sufficiently severe and pervasive to alter the conditions of her employment, including the armed home visit and threats of termination.

C. Violation of Law: Defendant's conduct violates the ADA (42 U.S.C. § 12112(a) and § 12203) and the Texas Labor Code § 21.051.

## **VIII.**

### **HARASSMENT BASED ON DISABILITY IN VIOLATION OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AND THE TEXAS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

22. The evidence will show that:

- A. Plaintiff belongs to a protected group;
- B. Plaintiff was subject to unwelcome harassment;
- C. The complained-of harassment was based on his disability;
- D. The harassment at issue affected a term, condition, or privilege of employment; and,
- E. The employer knew or should have known about the harassment and failed to take prompt remedial action.

**IX.**

**DISCRIMINATION UNDER THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973**

23. Plaintiff incorporates the preceding paragraphs as if fully stated herein.
24. As Defendant receives Federal financial assistance, Plaintiff asserts a claim under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794(a) (Section 504), which prohibits discrimination against an individual with a disability under any program or activity receiving such assistance.
25. Plaintiff is an individual with a disability, as defined by the Rehabilitation Act, and is qualified for her position. Defendant's discriminatory acts violate the Rehabilitation Act, which incorporates the standards and remedies of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) under 29 U.S.C. § 794(d).



26. Defendant, with actual knowledge of the substantial risk of harm to Plaintiff's protected rights, acted intentionally and with deliberate indifference by failing to take appropriate measures, thereby interfering with and retaliating against Plaintiff's recovery, work placement, and exercise of rights secured under 29 U.S.C. § 794(a).

**X.**

**RETALIATION**

**TEXAS LABOR CODE §451.001, ET SEQ.**

27. Labor Code section 451.001 states that an employer may not discharge, or in any other manner discriminate, against an employee because that employee has filed a workers' compensation claim in good faith. See TEX. LAB.CODE ANN. § 451.001; Plaintiff alleges that as a result of the fact that she sought treatment and benefits under the Worker's Compensation Act for an on-the-job injury, Defendant retaliated against Plaintiff.

**XI.**

**EEOC CHARGE AND RIGHT TO SUE**

28. Plaintiff filed EEOC Charge No. 451-2025-05812 on August 21, 2025, against Defendant based on disability discrimination, retaliation, and sex-plus discrimination. The EEOC issued a Notice of Right to Sue on September 11, 2025, which was received by Plaintiff via the

EEOC portal on the same date. This lawsuit is timely filed within ninety (90) days as required by 42 U.S.C. §2000e- 5(f)(1).

## **XII.**

### **ATTORNEY'S FEES**

29. Although Lopez is currently proceeding pro se, she reserves the right to retain legal counsel and seeks recovery of reasonable and necessary attorney's fees, expert fees, and court costs under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Texas Commission on Human Rights Act (TCHRA), and the Rehabilitation Act. In the event counsel is retained, Lopez seeks all such fees and costs incurred in connection with the prosecution of this action, including but not limited to:

- a. Preparation and trial of the claim, in an amount the Jury  
deems reasonable;
- b. Post-trial, pre-appeal legal services, in an amount the jury deems  
reasonable;
- c. An appeal to the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals, in an amount the  
jury deems reasonable;
- d. Making or responding to an Application for Writ of Certiorari to  
the Supreme Court of the United States, and attorneys' fees in the  
event that application for Writ of Certiorari is granted, in an

amount the jury deems reasonable; and,

e. Post-judgment discovery and collection in the event execution on

the judgment is necessary, in an amount the jury deems reasonable.

### **XIII.**

### **DAMAGES**

30. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's unlawful actions, Plaintiff suffered the following damages:

- A. Past and future lost wages and benefits;
- B. Emotional distress, humiliation, mental anguish and inconvenience related to the ADA, Rehabilitation Act, and TCHRA claims and all other damages to which she would have been entitled.
- C. Loss of professional reputation;
- D. Compensatory damages allowed under federal law and any available punitive damages.
- E. Expert fees as the court deems appropriate;
- F. Pre and Post judgement interest as allowed by law;

### **XIV.**

### **JURY DEMAND**

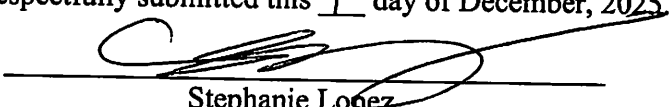
31. Plaintiff further demands a trial by jury.

**XV.**

**PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

32. WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, Plaintiff prays that the Defendant be cited to appear and answer herein and that upon a final hearing hereof, a judgment be rendered for Plaintiff and against the Defendant, for the actual damages set out above in an amount the jury deems reasonable under the circumstances, along with costs of court, pre-judgment interest, post-judgment interest, liquidated damages, and for such other and further relief to which Plaintiff may be justly entitled.

Respectfully submitted this 9 day of December, 2025

  
Stephanie Lopez  
Plaintiff, Pro Se  
3323 Cherokee Cove  
San Antonio, TX 78253  
Phone: (210) 420-4605  
Email: slo19592003@yahoo.com

**Attachments:**

1. Exhibit A – EEOC Charge of Discrimination
2. Exhibit B – EEOC Dismissal and Notice of Right to Sue

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS  
SAN ANTONIO DIVISION**

**STEPHANIE LOPEZ**  
**Plaintiff,**

**V.**

**THE CITY OF SAN ANTONIO**  
**BY AND THROUGH ITS AGENT**  
**THE SAN ANTONIO FIRE**  
**DEPARTMENT**  
**Defendant,**

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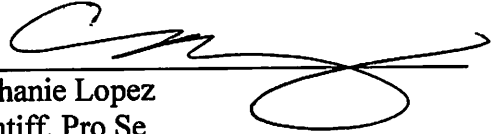
**CIVIL ACTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that on this 9th day of December, 2025, I filed the foregoing document, Plaintiff's Original Complaint and Jury Demand, with the Clerk of the Court for the Western District of Texas.

I further certify that, upon issuance of the Summons by the Clerk of the Court, I will cause a copy of the Summons and a copy of the Complaint to be served upon the Defendant, The City of San Antonio, by and through its agent, the San Antonio Fire Department, via certified mail or personal service, addressed to the designated agent for service of process as identified in the Complaint:

City Clerk, Debbie Racca-Sittre  
City Tower, 100 W. Houston Street, Concourse  
San Antonio, Texas 78205

  
Stephanie Lopez  
Plaintiff, Pro Se  
3323 Cherokee Cove  
San Antonio, TX 78253  
(210) 420-4605



## U.S. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

San Antonio Field Office  
5410 Fredericksburg Road, Suite 200  
San Antonio, TX 78229  
(210) 640-7530  
Website: [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)

### **DISMISSAL**

(This Notice replaces EEOC FORMS 161, 161-A & 161-B)

Issued On: 09/11/2025

To: Ms. Stephanie Lopez  
3323 Cherokee Cove  
San Antonio, TX 78253

Charge No: 451-2025-05812

EEOC Representative and email: Joseph Riello  
Federal Investigator  
[Joseph.Riello@eeoc.gov](mailto:Joseph.Riello@eeoc.gov)

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### **DISMISSAL**


The EEOC is closing this charge because: Failure to Respond.

### **NOTICE OF YOUR RIGHT TO SUE**

This is official notice that the EEOC has dismissed your charge and has issued you notice of your right to sue the respondent(s) on this charge. If you choose to file a lawsuit against the respondent(s) on this charge under federal law in federal or state court, **your lawsuit must be filed WITHIN 90 DAYS of your receipt of EEOC's official notice of dismissal.** You should keep a record of the date you received the EEOC's official notice of dismissal. Your right to sue based on this charge will be lost if you do not file a lawsuit in court within 90 days. (The time limit for filing a lawsuit based on a claim under state law may be different.)

If you file a lawsuit based on this charge, please sign-in to the EEOC Public Portal and upload the court complaint to charge 451-2025-05812.

On behalf of the Commission,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
for Norma J. Guzman  
Field Director

**Cc:**

City of San Antonio-San Antonio Fire Department  
315 S Santa Rosa  
San Antonio, TX 78207

Please retain this Notice for your records.



## U.S. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

## CHARGE OF DISCRIMINATION

For Official Use Only – Charge Number:

451-2025-05812

EEOC Form 5A (July 2024)

<b>Personal Information</b>	First Name: <u>Stephanie</u> MI: <u>N</u> Last Name: <u>Lopez</u> Address: <u>3323 Cherokee Cove</u> Apt.: _____ City: <u>San Antonio</u> County: <u>Bexar</u> State: <u>TX</u> Zip Code: <u>78253</u> Phone: <u>210-420-4605</u> Home <input type="checkbox"/> Work <input type="checkbox"/> Cell <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email: <u>slo19592003@yahoo.com</u>
<b>Who do you think discriminated against you?</b>	Employer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Union <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Agency <input type="checkbox"/> Other Organization <input type="checkbox"/> Organization Name: <u>City of San Antonio and its agent through the San Antonio Fire Department</u> Address: <u>315 S. Santa Rosa Ave</u> Suite: _____ City: <u>San Antonio</u> State: <u>TX</u> Zip Code: <u>78207</u> Phone: <u>210-207-8400</u>
<b>Why you think you were discriminated against?</b>	Race <input type="checkbox"/> Color <input type="checkbox"/> Religion <input type="checkbox"/> Sex <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Origin <input type="checkbox"/> Age <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Genetic Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retaliation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (specify) family status; interference <i>accident</i>
<b>What happened to you that you think was discriminatory?</b>	Date of <u>most recent job action</u> you think was discriminatory: <u>10/25/25</u> Also describe briefly <u>each job action</u> you think was discriminatory and when it happened (estimate). (Please see attached document for complete documentation.) I was hired as a Firefighter in 2000. During COVID-19 I worked as a Paramedic and developed Long COVID, requiring restrictions and accommodations. On Oct. 25, 2024, a Chief and two armed Arson Investigators came to my home to deliver work/comp documents that were later emailed, showing the armed visit was unnecessary and meant to intimidate me. As a female and single mother, this caused fear and humiliation. Though two male coworkers were treated the same that day, no one else before or since has. Respondent has also threatened "voluntary resignation" for following my doctor's orders, withdrawn light duty, and issued conflicting work directives. I believe I was discriminated and retaliated against due to disability (Long COVID), sex, family status, and protected activity.
<b>Signature and Verification</b>	I understand this charge will be filed with both the EEOC and the State or local Agency, if any. I will advise the agencies if I change my address, phone, or email. I will cooperate fully with them in the processing of my charge in accordance with their procedures.  I understand by signing below that I am filing a charge of employment discrimination with the EEOC. I understand that the EEOC is required by law to give a copy of the charge, which includes my allegations and my name, to the organization named above. I also understand that the EEOC can only investigate charges of job discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or based on retaliation for filing a charge of job discrimination, participating in an investigation of a job discrimination complaint, or opposing job discrimination.  I declare under penalty of perjury that the above is true and correct. Signature: <u>[Signature]</u> Date: <u>August 21, 2025</u>



**PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT:** Under the Privacy Act of 1974, Pub. Law 93-579, authority to request personal data and its uses are:

1. **FORM NUMBER/TITLE/DATE.** EEOC Form 5A, Charge of Discrimination, Issued October 2017.
2. **AUTHORITY.** 42 U.S.C. 2000e-5(b), 29 U.S.C. 211, 29 U.S.C. 626, 42 U.S.C. 12117, 42 U.S.C. 2000ff-6.
3. **PRINCIPAL PURPOSES.** The purposes of a charge, taken on this form or otherwise reduced to writing (whether later recorded on this form or not) are, as applicable under the EEOC anti-discrimination statutes (EEOC statutes), to preserve private suit rights under the EEOC statutes, to invoke the EEOC's jurisdiction and, where dual-filing or referral arrangements exist, to begin state or local proceedings.
4. **ROUTINE USES.** This form is used to provide facts that may establish the existence of matters covered by the EEOC statutes (and as applicable, other federal, state or local laws). Information given will be used by staff to guide its mediation and investigation efforts and, as applicable, to determine, conciliate and litigate claims of unlawful discrimination. This form may be presented to or disclosed to other federal, state or local agencies as appropriate or necessary in carrying out EEOC's functions. A copy of this charge will ordinarily be sent to the respondent organization against which the charge is made.
5. **WHETHER DISCLOSURE IS MANDATORY; EFFECT OF NOT GIVING INFORMATION.** Charges must be reduced to writing and should identify the charging party and respondent and the actions or policies complained of. Without a written charge, EEOC will ordinarily not act on the complaint. Charges under Title VII, ADA or GINA must be sworn to or affirmed (either by using this form or by presenting a notarized statement or unsworn declaration under penalty of perjury); charges under the ADEA should ordinarily be signed. Charges may be clarified or amplified later by amendment. It is not mandatory that this form be used to make a charge.

#### **NOTICE OF RIGHT TO REQUEST SUBSTANTIAL WEIGHT REVIEW**

Charges filed at a state or local Fair Employment Practices Agency (FEPA) that dual-files charges with EEOC will ordinarily be handled first by the FEPA. Some charges filed at EEOC may also be first handled by a FEPA under worksharing agreements. You will be told which agency will handle your charge. When the FEPA is the first to handle the charge, it will notify you of its final resolution of the matter. Then, if you wish EEOC to give Substantial Weight Review to the FEPA's final findings, you must ask us in writing to do so within 15 days of your receipt of its findings. Otherwise, we will ordinarily adopt the FEPA's finding and close our file on the charge.

#### **NOTICE OF NON-RETALIATION REQUIREMENTS**

Please **notify** EEOC or the state or local agency where you filed your charge **if retaliation is taken against you or others** who oppose discrimination or cooperate in any investigation or lawsuit concerning this charge. Under Section 704(a) of Title VII, Section 4(d) of the ADEA, Section 503(a) of the ADA, Section 207(f) of GINA and 42 USC 2000gg-2(f)(1) of the PWFA, it is unlawful for an *employer* to discriminate against present or former employees or job applicants, for an *employment agency* to discriminate against anyone, or for a *union* to discriminate against its members or membership applicants, because they have opposed any practice made unlawful by the statutes, or because they have made a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under the laws. The Equal Pay Act has similar provisions and Section 503(b) of the ADA prohibits coercion, intimidation, threats or interference with anyone for exercising or enjoying, or aiding or encouraging others in their exercise or enjoyment of rights under the Act.

August 21, 2025

## **EEOC CHARGE OF DISCRIMINATION**

### **Charging Party:**

Stephanie Lopez  
3323 Cherokee Cove  
San Antonio, TX 78253  
Phone: 210-420-4605  
Email: slo19592003@yahoo.com

### **Respondent/Employer:**

Organization Name: City of San Antonio and its agent through the San Antonio Fire Department  
Type of Employer: Local Government that I applied to, work for, or worked for  
Number of Employees: 20 or more employees  
Primary Address: 315 S Santa Rosa, San Antonio, TX 78207  
County: Bexar  
Phone Number: 210-207-8400  
Work Address: 315 S Santa Rosa, San Antonio, TX 78207  
Remote Work: No

## **STATEMENT OF HARM**

I was hired by the above-named Respondent as a Firefighter, but during the COVID-19 pandemic I served as a Paramedic on an ambulance, transporting and treating critically ill COVID-19 patients. As a direct result of this frontline work, I developed a work-related illness: Long COVID. This condition required ongoing medical restrictions and accommodations.

On or about October 25, 2024, Respondent deployed my own coworkers — a high-ranking administrative Chief and two armed Arson Investigators — in official City vehicles to my private residence to hand-deliver employment/worker's compensation documents. The same document was later emailed, showing the armed, in-person delivery was unnecessary and intended to intimidate me.

As a female employee and single mother, this was deeply frightening and humiliating. The intimidation was compounded by the presence of my children and the fact that my own colleagues were used as armed agents against me. Although two male coworkers were subjected to this same tactic that day, Respondent has never before or since used this method on any other employees. This proves the action was selective, extraordinary, and retaliatory.

August 21, 2025

I believe Respondent's actions were taken in retaliation for my protected activity, including: filing and maintaining a workers' compensation claim, requesting reasonable accommodations consistent with my medical restrictions, and raising concerns regarding misuse of managerial authority and noncompliance with Texas Administrative Code §129.6 (Bona Fide Offers of Employment).

I have also been subjected to discrimination due to my disability/medical status (Long COVID) and sex. Respondent has issued conflicting orders regarding my return-to-work status, threatened to classify me as a voluntary resignation for following my doctor's restrictions, and withdrawn light duty offers in violation of workers' compensation law.

The actions of Respondent caused me significant emotional distress, fear for my safety, and worsening of my medical condition, and have created a chilling effect on my ability to assert my rights under federal law.

## **VIOLATIONS**

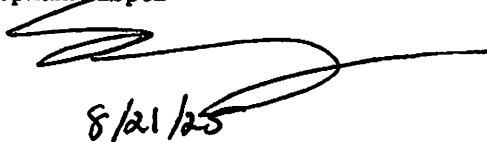
I believe I have been discriminated against and retaliated against due to my:

- Disability (Long COVID)
- Sex (female)
- Family status (single mother / sex-plus discrimination)
- Engagement in protected activity

In violation of:

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, including §704(a) Anti-Retaliation Clause (sex discrimination, sex-plus/family responsibilities discrimination, and retaliation);
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (disability discrimination, retaliation, and interference/coercion under 29 C.F.R. §1630.12(b));
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (if applicable, as Respondent receives federal funds, including COVID-related funding).

Stephanie Lopez



8/21/25