

August 24, 2020

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL STOPS BEAUTY PRODUCT PACKAGING FACILITY FROM RETALIATING AGAINST FEMALE WORKERS

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced he has reached a [consent decree](#) that will require a beauty product packaging facility to end its practice of retaliating against employees who file sexual harassment complaints and modify its practices to prevent any future sexual harassment. The consent decree resolves [the lawsuit](#) also filed today by Raoul against Vee Pak, LLC, doing business as Voyant Beauty (Voyant).

The consent decree stems from a lawsuit Raoul filed simultaneously over allegations that female employees at Voyant have experienced persistent and pervasive sexual harassment for years while the company ignored their complaints. Additionally, Raoul alleged the company responded to an employee protest and petition with an aggressive campaign of retaliation.

“A workplace culture that subjects female employees to harassment and penalizes them for reporting such actions is reprehensible – and illegal,” Raoul said. “The workers at this facility had the courage to stand up against this terrible treatment. This consent decree will ensure Voyant’s unacceptable treatment of female employees will not stand any longer.”

Voyant operates a facility in Countryside, Ill. that packages beauty products. Until recently, Voyant used Alternative Staffing, Inc. (ASI), a temporary staffing agency, to provide workers for the facility. In a lawsuit filed in Cook County Circuit Court, Raoul alleges that multiple female employees assigned by ASI to work at Voyant were repeatedly sexually harassed by male mechanics working at the facility. On various occasions, the female workers made specific complaints to Voyant supervisors and ASI managers, but they took little or no action to remedy the harassment.

On July 8, 2019, after Voyant and ASI failed to act on the workers’ complaints a group of workers submitted a petition to Voyant and ASI signed by more than 50 employees. This petition detailed the sexual harassment endured by employees, including “Voyant Beauty employees touching us in our private parts, making obscene comments and gestures, and creating a hostile work environment which is toxic and extraordinarily traumatic.” The Attorney General alleges that approximately one week after the petition was submitted, Voyant and ASI began to take retaliatory action, including reducing work hours, against workers who complained about the sexual harassment.

After Voyant and ASI allegedly continued to fail to address the concerns raised in the petition and did not stop the harassment, a group of workers staged a protest outside the facility on July 24, 2019. Following the protest, Voyant and ASI allegedly escalated the retaliation against workers who participated in the protest and terminated the workers who led the protest. After the companies’ actions drew attention from media and government agencies, the workers were allowed to return to work, but with reduced shifts.

The consent decree implements a process to monitor Voyant’s practices to protect its workers from further retaliation and sexual harassment. It also requires Voyant to provide training to its employees on law prohibiting sexual harassment and how to comply with them. The consent decree also requires the appointment of a monitor for a two-year period, funded by the \$85,000 in penalties Voyant has agreed to pay, to ensure compliance with the consent decree.

The consent decree prohibits Voyant from retaliating against its employees and requires Voyant to provide training to Voyant employees on laws prohibiting sexual harassment and how to comply with them. The consent decree also requires Voyant to implement procedures to promptly investigate, document, and response to claims of sexual harassment. Finally, consent decree mandates the appointment of a monitor for a two-year period, funded by the \$85,000 in penalties Voyant has agreed to pay, which will ensure Voyant's compliance with the consent decree.

Attorney General Raoul encourages workers who have experienced workplace harassment to contact his office's Workplace Rights Hotline at 1-844-740-5076 or by visiting the [Attorney General's website](#).

Bureau Chief Alvar Ayala and Assistant Attorney General Javier Castro handled the case for Raoul's Workplace Rights Bureau.