



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
COMMISSION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MCAD FINDS THAT CAPE COD'S WILLOWBEND COUNTRY CLUB
ENGAGED IN AGE DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION

CLUB UNLAWFULLY TERMINATED FIFTY-NINE YEAR OLD VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES

Boston, MA – The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) has determined that Willowbend Country Club, a private golf club and resort on Cape Cod, MA, engaged in age discrimination and retaliation when it laid off its fifty-nine year old Vice President of Sales.

The Complainant, Virginia DiIorio, was terminated along with twelve other employees, of whom ten were over age fifty. Following the layoffs, there were no employees in Willowbend's real estate department who were over age fifty. DiIorio was proactive, aggressive, ambitious, a hard worker and a great leader.

The MCAD rejected explanations that DiIorio was selected for layoff because she earned a higher salary than others in the real estate office and wintered in Florida. MCAD Hearing Officer Betty Waxman credited testimony that the General Manager said he wanted to "bring in some younger blood." The evidence also established that following DiIorio's layoff and the filing of an age discrimination complaint against the Club, the General Manager barred the Complainant and her husband from entering the Club grounds as guests of other members.

As compensation for the Club's discriminatory behavior, the Hearing Officer awarded DiIorio \$200,000 in emotional distress damages, her \$62,000 salary from the date of her layoff until her 65th birthday, and an additional yearly amount equal to one-half of her 2005 commissions. "Age discrimination constitutes a serious violation of law. This award represents the grievous nature of the incident," said MCAD General Counsel Catherine Ziehl.

Age discrimination violates chapter 151B of the Massachusetts General Laws. MCAD, the Commonwealth's civil rights law enforcement agency, enforces anti-discrimination laws in the areas of employment, housing, lending, and public accommodation. MCAD currently maintains offices in Boston, New Bedford, Springfield, and Worcester. Further information about the agency is available at www.mass.gov/mcad.

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