

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
WEST VIRGINIA

Teresa A. Ansell v. Aledade, Inc.

Ansell · No. 2:24-cv-00640 · Decided December 18, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of West Virginia grants Aledade, Inc.’s motion for summary judgment in Teresa A. Ansell’s age-discrimination action under the West Virginia Human Rights Act. The court holds that Ansell established a prima facie case based on her termination while a substantially younger employee with identified performance issues was retained, but concludes that she failed to show that Aledade’s stated reasons—cost reduction, business needs, relative qualifications, and performance concerns—were pretextual.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of West Virginia
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Joseph R. Goodwin
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of West Virginia
DECIDED	December 18, 2025
DOCKET	2:24-cv-00640
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendant moved for summary judgment on Plaintiff's age-discrimination claim under the West Virginia Human Rights Act.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Summary judgment is appropriate when there is no genuine dispute as to any material fact and the moving party is entitled to judgment as a matter of law. The court views permissible inferences in the light most favorable to the nonmoving party and does not weigh evidence or determine credibility.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court opinion
PARTIES	Teresa A. Ansell v. Aledade, Inc.

TOPICS

- age discrimination
- employment discrimination
- summary judgment
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

employment law

employment discrimination

age discrimination

civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Ansell established a prima facie case of age discrimination under the West Virginia Human Rights Act.
2. Whether Aledade articulated a legitimate, nondiscriminatory reason for selecting Ansell's position for elimination.
3. Whether Ansell produced sufficient evidence to show that Aledade's stated reason was pretextual or that age was a significant motivating factor under a mixed-motive theory.
4. Whether summary judgment was appropriate on Ansell's WVHRA age-discrimination claim.

HOLDINGS

1. Ansell established a prima facie case because she was within the protected age class, suffered an adverse employment action, and showed an inference of discrimination through evidence that a substantially younger, similarly situated employee identified as having performance issues was retained.
2. Aledade carried its burden of production by articulating legitimate, nondiscriminatory reasons for implementing the reduction in force, selecting Ansell's position for elimination, and retaining younger employees.
3. Ansell failed to produce sufficient evidence that Aledade's stated reasons were false or a pretext for age discrimination.
4. Ansell failed to show that age was a significant motivating factor in Aledade's decision under a mixed-motive theory.
5. Summary judgment was appropriate for Aledade because Ansell failed to rebut Aledade's legitimate, nondiscriminatory reason under either a pretext or mixed-motive analysis.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The court’s role is not to “decide whether the [employer’s] reason was wise, fair, or even correct, ultimately, so long as it truly was the reason for the plaintiff’s termination.”” (Section III.C.1)

“For the foregoing reasons, Defendant’s Motion for Summary Judgment [ECF No. 38] is GRANTED.” (Section IV)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Aledade hired Teresa Ansell in April 2022 when she was 66 years old and terminated her employment in October 2023 as part of a company-wide cost-reduction effort. The decision maker determined that the Northeast implementation team was overstaffed and selected Ansell's position for elimination based on business needs, her generalist skills, and concerns about her ability to handle complex projects independently. A substantially younger employee, Brittany Grothouse, was retained despite being identified as having performance issues because she could handle complex cases and possessed subject-matter expertise important to Aledade. Ansell

identified no age-related comments by managers and offered only a vague coworker remark and the fact that she was the oldest employee considered for termination as evidence of age discrimination.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Ansell filed a complaint on November 12, 2024, alleging age discrimination under the West Virginia Human Rights Act. Aledade moved for summary judgment on August 19, 2025, arguing that Ansell had not established a prima facie case or, alternatively, had not rebutted Aledade's legitimate, nondiscriminatory reason for terminating her. The court concluded that Ansell established a prima facie case but failed to establish pretext or mixed motive and granted summary judgment for Aledade.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Lester v. Gilbert, 85 F. Supp. 3d 851 (S.D. W. Va. 2015)
- News & Observer Publ'g Co. v. Raleigh-Durham Airport Auth., 597 F.3d 570 (4th Cir. 2010)
- Runyon v. Hannah, No. 2:12-1394, 2013 WL 2151235 (S.D. W. Va. May 16, 2013)
- Williams v. Griffin, 952 F.2d 820 (4th Cir. 1991)
- Celotex Corp. v. Catrett, 477 U.S. 317 (1986)
- Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, Inc., 477 U.S. 242 (1986)
- Matsushita Elec. Indus. Co. v. Zenith Radio Corp., 475 U.S. 574 (1986)
- Dash v. Mayweather, 731 F.3d 303 (4th Cir. 2013)
- Barefoot v. Sundale Nursing Home, 193 W. Va. 475, 457 S.E.2d 152 (1994)
- Shepherdstown Volunteer Fire Dep't v. State ex rel. W. Va. Hum. Rts. Comm'n, 172 W. Va. 627, 309 S.E.2d 342 (1983)
- Texas Dep't of Cmty. Affairs v. Burdine, 450 U.S. 248 (1981)
- Conaway v. E. Assoc. Coal Corp., 178 W. Va. 164, 358 S.E.2d 423 (1986)
- Thompson v. CSX Transp., Inc., 582 F. Supp. 3d 355 (S.D. W. Va. 2022)
- Nestor v. Bruce Hardwood Floors, L.P., 210 W. Va. 692, 558 S.E.2d 691 (2001)
- Knotts v. Grafton City Hosp., 237 W. Va. 169, 786 S.E.2d 188 (2016)
- O'Connor v. Consol. Coin Caterers Corp., 517 U.S. 308 (1996)
- Miller v. Terramite Corp., 114 F. App'x 536 (4th Cir. 2004)
- Linger-Long v. Milvet, No. 23-757, 2025 WL 2614062 (W. Va. Sept. 10, 2025)
- Johnson v. Killmer, 219 W. Va. 320, 633 S.E.2d 265 (2006)
- Reeves v. Sanderson Plumbing Prods., Inc., 530 U.S. 133 (2000)
- St. Mary's Honor Ctr. v. Hicks, 509 U.S. 502 (1993)
- EEOC v. Clay Printing Co., 955 F.2d 936 (4th Cir. 1992)

- DeJarnette v. Corning Inc., 133 F.3d 293 (4th Cir. 1998)
- Giannopoulos v. Brach & Brock Confections, Inc., 109 F.3d 406 (7th Cir. 1997)
- Alderman v. Fola Coal Co., LLC, Nos. 2:10-cv-00907–00910, 00912–00915, 2011 WL 5358717 (S.D. W. Va. Nov. 7, 2011)
- Birkbeck v. Marvel Lighting Corp., 30 F.3d 507 (4th Cir. 1994)
- Mayflower Vehicle Sys., Inc. v. Cheeks, 218 W. Va. 703, 629 S.E.2d 762 (2006)
- Gibson v. Little Gen. Stores, Inc., 221 W. Va. 360, 655 S.E.2d 106 (2007)
- Haynes v. Waste Connections, Inc., 922 F.3d 219 (4th Cir. 2019)
- EEOC v. Sears Roebuck & Co., 243 F.3d 846 (4th Cir. 2001)
- Williams v. Precision Coil, Inc., 194 W. Va. 52, 459 S.E.2d 329 (1995)
- Henson v. Liggett Grp., Inc., 61 F.3d 270 (4th Cir. 1995)
- Haywood v. Locke, 387 F. App'x 355 (4th Cir. 2010)
- Mitchell v. Toledo Hosp., 964 F.2d 577 (6th Cir. 1992)
- Balderson v. Lincare Inc., Civ. No. 2:19-cv-00666, 2020 WL 6051266 (S.D. W. Va. Oct. 13, 2020)

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