

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF
MASSACHUSETTS

Monique Davis v. City of Springfield, William Mahoney, and Gladys
Oyola

Davis · No. 3:22-cv-30011-KAR · Decided November 26, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts grants the defendants’ motion for summary judgment on all claims brought by self-represented plaintiff Monique Davis. The court addresses alleged race discrimination, hostile work environment, and retaliation claims under Title VII and Massachusetts General Laws chapter 151B, including claims concerning failure to promote, a COVID-19 merit bonus, workplace treatment, and alleged harassment. The court concludes that Davis failed to establish the required discriminatory or retaliatory inference and, for the hostile work environment claim, did not show sufficiently severe or pervasive racial harassment.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Katherine A. Robertson
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts
DECIDED	November 26, 2025
DOCKET	3:22-cv-30011-KAR
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff's self-represented Title VII and Massachusetts Chapter 151B claims for race discrimination, hostile work environment, retaliation, and constructive discharge were before the court on defendants' motion for summary judgment.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Summary judgment is appropriate when the movant shows that there is no genuine dispute as to any material fact and the movant is entitled to judgment as a matter of law. The court viewed the record in the light most favorable to the nonmoving party and drew reasonable inferences in her favor.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unknown

TOPICS

employment discrimination

title vii

racial discrimination

hostile work environment

summary judgment

PRACTICE AREAS

employment law

civil rights

civil procedure

municipal law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Davis presented sufficient evidence to support Title VII and Chapter 151B disparate-treatment claims based on failure to promote, the COVID-19 merit bonus, and alleged favoritism in providing information about the public-records position.
2. Whether Davis presented evidence of a severe or pervasive racially hostile work environment under Title VII or Chapter 151B.
3. Whether Davis established a retaliation claim based on the revision of her job description or her resignation.
4. Whether Davis established constructive discharge.

HOLDINGS

1. Davis failed to establish a prima facie inference that she was denied the public records coordinator position because of race because the selected candidate was also Black and the record contained no direct evidence or other competent evidence of discriminatory animus. Defendants were entitled to summary judgment on the failure-to-promote claims.
2. Davis failed to show that any difference in treatment concerning the COVID-19 merit bonus or information about the public-records position was because of race, and the website referral was not shown to be a materially adverse employment action. These events could not support a Title VII or Chapter 151B disparate-treatment claim.
3. Davis failed to establish a racially hostile work environment because the alleged conduct was not sufficiently severe or pervasive and was not shown to be based on race. Defendants were entitled to summary judgment on the Title VII and Chapter 151B hostile-work-environment claims.
4. Davis failed to establish retaliation because she did not show protected activity known to the alleged retaliators, causation, or a materially adverse employment action. The revised job description merely reflected duties she was already performing and did not change her grade, compensation, or actual duties.
5. Davis failed to establish constructive discharge because she did not first establish a hostile work environment or working conditions sufficiently severe to compel a reasonable person to resign.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Summary judgment is appropriate if “the movant shows that there is no genuine dispute as to any material fact and the movant is entitled to judgment as a matter of law.””

“Offhand comments and a tense or uncomfortable working relationship with one’s supervisor are, without

more, insufficient to support a hostile work environment claim.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Davis, who identified as Black, worked for the Springfield Police Department and later in the City Clerk's Office, where she applied for the public records coordinator position. The City Clerk selected another Black employee, Marvin Shubrick, for the position, and Davis subsequently complained about workplace treatment, management decisions, and alleged discrimination. Davis's job description was revised to reflect her public-records work, without a change in grade, pay, or actual duties, and the City investigated her complaints. Davis took FMLA leave and resigned on January 27, 2022, citing an unbearable and uncomfortable work environment.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Monique Davis sued the City of Springfield, William Mahoney, and Gladys Oyola alleging employment discrimination, hostile work environment, and retaliation. Defendants moved for summary judgment on all counts. The court granted the motion in full and directed the Clerk's Office to close the case.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- United States v. Martínez-Benítez, 914 F.3d 1, 2 n.1 (1st Cir. 2019)
- Mu v. Omni Hotels Mgmt. Corp., 882 F.3d 1, 5 (1st Cir. 2018)
- Celotex Corp. v. Catrett, 477 U.S. 317, 323, 325 (1986)
- Mendes v. Medtronic, Inc., 18 F.3d 13, 15 (1st Cir. 1994)
- Garcia-Garcia v. Costco Wholesale Corp., 878 F.3d 411, 417 (1st Cir. 2017)
- Tian v. Aspen Tech., Inc., 53 F. Supp. 3d 345, 350-51 (D. Mass. 2014)
- Puerto Rico Am. Ins. Co. v. Rivera-Vázquez, 603 F.3d 125, 131 (1st Cir. 2010)
- O'Horo, M.D. v. Boston Med. Ctr. Corp., 131 F.4th 1, 12, 14-22 (1st Cir. 2025)
- Givens v. Mass. Inst. of Tech., 2025 WL 2645380, at *1, *5, *9 n.13 (D. Mass. Sept. 15, 2025)
- McDonnell Douglas Corp. v. Green, 411 U.S. 792, 802-04 (1973)
- Straughn v. Delta Air Lines, Inc., 250 F.3d 23, 33 (1st Cir. 2001)
- Knight v. Avon Prods., Inc., 780 N.E.2d 1255, 1261-62 (Mass. 2002)
- Pipoli v. Dept. of Human Servs., Off. of Veterans Servs., 123 F.4th 565, 571 (1st Cir. 2024)
- Fantini v. Salem State Coll., 557 F.3d 22, 30, 32 (1st Cir. 2009)
- Brandt v. Fitzpatrick, 957 F.3d 67, 78 (1st Cir. 2020)
- Kouvchinov v. Parametric Tech. Corp., 537 F.3d 62, 67 (1st Cir. 2008)
- Rodríguez-Cardi v. MMM Holdings, Inc., 936 F.3d 40, 48-49 (1st Cir. 2019)
- Mesnick v. Gen. Elec. Co., 950 F.2d 816, 825 (1st Cir. 1991)
- Ashley v. Paramount Hotel Grp., Inc., 451 F. Supp. 2d 319, 330 (D.R.I. 2006)

- Diaz v. City of Somerville, 59 F.4th 24, 29 (1st Cir. 2023)
- Matthews v. Ocean Spray Cranberries, Inc., 686 N.E.2d 1303, 1309-10 (Mass. 1997)
- Garmon v. Nat'l R.R. Passenger Corp., 844 F.3d 307, 314, 317-18 (1st Cir. 2016)
- Burlington Indus., Inc. v. Ellerth, 524 U.S. 742, 768 (1998)
- Douglas v. J.C. Penney Co., 474 F.3d 10, 15 (1st Cir. 2007)
- Ponte v. Steelcase, Inc., 741 F.3d 310, 319-20 (1st Cir. 2014)
- Kathuria v. Dental Dreams LLC, 2020 WL 3719507, at *6 (D. Mass. Jan. 8, 2020)
- Gerald v. Univ. of P.R., 707 F.3d 7, 18 (1st Cir. 2013)
- Flood v. Bank of Am. Corp., 780 F.3d 1, 12 (1st Cir. 2015)
- Suarez v. Pueblo Int'l, Inc., 229 F.3d 49, 54 (1st Cir. 2000)
- Colón-Fontáñez v. Mun. of San Juan, 660 F.3d 17, 44 (1st Cir. 2011)
- Hall v. FMR Corp., 667 F. Supp. 2d 185, 201-02 (D. Mass. 2009)
- Pike v. Budd, 133 F.4th 74, 88-89 & n.8 (1st Cir. 2025)
- Hernandez-Loring v. Universidad Metropolitana, 233 F.3d 49, 55 & n.4 (1st Cir. 2000)
- Nakanwagi v. Exec. Off. of Trial Ct., 786 F. Supp. 3d 313, 323-24 (D. Mass. 2025)
- Kinzer v. Whole Foods Mkt., Inc., 99 F.4th 105, 115 (1st Cir. 2024)
- Alvarado v. Donahue, 687 F.3d 453, 459 (1st Cir. 2012)
- Cham v. Station Operators, Inc., 685 F.3d 87, 94 (1st Cir. 2012)
- Marrero v. Goya of P.R., Inc., 304 F.3d 7, 23 (1st Cir. 2002)
- Cruz v. Coach Stores Inc., 202 F.3d 560, 566 (2d Cir. 2000)
- Wimmer v. Suffolk Cty. Police Dep't, 176 F.3d 125, 134-35 (2d Cir. 1999)
- Pina v. Children's Place, 740 F.3d 785, 801 (1st Cir. 2014)
- Medina-Rivera v. MVM, Inc., 713 F.3d 132, 139 (1st Cir. 2013)
- Pomales v. Celulares Telefónica, Inc., 447 F.3d 79, 85 (1st Cir. 2006)
- Thirkield v. Neary & Hunter OB/GYN, LLC, 76 F. Supp. 3d 339, 351 (D. Mass. 2015)
- Hernandez-Torres v. Intercontinental Trading, Inc., 158 F.3d 43, 47-48 (1st Cir. 1998)
- Bergeron v. Cabral, 560 F.3d 1, 7-8 (1st Cir. 2009)
- Bodman v. Me. Dept. of Health & Human Servs., 787 F. Supp. 2d 89, 108 (D. Me. 2011)
- Pa. State Police v. Suders, 542 U.S. 129, 147 (2004)
- Landrau-Romero v. Banco Popular de Puerto Rico, 212 F.3d 607, 613 (1st Cir. 2000)
- Henricks v. White Cty., No. 4:10 CV 42, 2012 WL 5948199, at *8 (N.D. Ind. Nov. 28, 2012)