

NY agency files discrimination complaint against Amazon

May 18 2022, by Haleluya Hadero



An Amazon logo appears on a delivery van, Oct. 1, 2020, in Boston. A state agency in New York has filed an administrative complaint against Amazon, Wednesday, May 18, 2022, alleging the e-commerce giant discriminated against pregnant and disabled workers by denying them “reasonable accommodations” and forcing them to take unpaid leave. Credit: AP Photo/Steven Senne, File

A state agency in New York has filed an administrative complaint against Amazon, alleging the e-commerce giant discriminated against pregnant and disabled workers by denying them "reasonable accommodations" and forcing them to take unpaid leave, Gov. Kathy Hochul announced Wednesday.

Amazon has more than 39,000 workers across New York in nearly two dozen worksites, which employ in-house consultants who evaluate accommodation requests, according to a statement from the [governor's](#) office. But the New York State Division of Human Rights, the agency that filed the complaint, alleges the retailer has a policy that allows onsite managers to override recommendations from the consultants, which has led to denials in the worker requests.

State law requires all employers to provide reasonable accommodation for pregnant and disabled workers. The governor's office lists three separate employee requests from pregnant or disabled workers that it says were denied.

The complaint also alleges that under Amazon's [policy](#), employees with disabilities are forced to take unpaid medical leave even when the accommodation consultant "has identified a reasonable accommodation that would allow the employee to perform the essential functions of their position without an undue burden," the governor's [office](#) said in a statement. It said such practices violate [state law](#).

"My administration will hold any employer accountable, regardless of how big or small, if they do not treat their [workers](#) with the dignity and respect they deserve," Governor Hochul said in a statement.

Among other thing, the complaint seeks to require Amazon to cease what it calls its discriminatory conduct and pay fines and penalties. Seattle-based Amazon.com Inc. did not immediately respond to a request

for comment.

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Citation: NY agency files discrimination complaint against Amazon (2022, May 18) retrieved 27 April 2024 from

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