

## \$3.5 Million Settlement in EEOC Probe of Fashion Retailer

December 17, 2018

The Cato Corporation (“Cato”), a leading retailer of fashion and accessories, has entered into a voluntary settlement with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (“EEOC”). Cato has over a thousand stores in thirty-two states. Cato has agreed to pay \$3.5 million to resolve a nationwide investigation conducted by the EEOC.



The EEOC’s investigation found that Cato denied reasonable accommodations to certain pregnant employees or those with disabilities, made employees take unpaid leaves of absences, and/or terminated them because of their disabilities. Under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, refusing to accommodate pregnant women with limitations and restrictions is a violation.

**It is a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) to deny reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities, such as job modifications, leaves of absences, and returns to work.**

In addition to the \$3.5 million dollar settlement, Cato has agreed to revise its employment policies to consider whether medical restrictions of pregnant or employees with disabilities can be reasonably accommodated. Cato will also conduct training for over ten thousand employees and report periodically for three years on its responses to requests for reasonable accommodation by pregnant employees and those with disabilities. The agreement includes a claims process to distribute the \$3.5 million to employees who were terminated due to pregnancy or disabilities.



Jenny Holt Teeter  
Phone: 501.801.3814  
Fax: 501.372.3359  
Email: [teeter@gill-law.com](mailto:teeter@gill-law.com)



Brianna C. Cook  
Phone: 501.801.3812  
Fax: 501.372.3359  
Email: [cook@gill-law.com](mailto:cook@gill-law.com)

**For more information regarding the ADA or other EEOC related issues, please contact Jenny Teeter or Brianna Cook at (501) 376-3800.**