

Justice Served: Healthcare Workers to Receive Big Settlement for Vaccination Discrimination

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Federal Judge John F. Kness granted final approval for the class action settlement at today's hearing in *Jane Doe 1, et al. v. Northshore University Healthsystem* for more than 500 current and former health care workers who were unlawfully discriminated against and denied religious exemptions from the COVID shot mandate.

Judge Kness granted verbal final approval today and he will enter the final judgment within the next week.

Liberty Counsel settled this historic, first-of-its-kind class action settlement against a private employer who unlawfully denied hundreds of religious exemption requests to COVID-19 shots. As a result, NorthShore will pay \$10,337,500 to compensate these health care employees who were victims of religious discrimination, and who were punished for their religious beliefs against taking an injection associated with aborted fetal cells.

Now that the final approval is granted by the court, the settlement checks will be sent out within 60 days. It is estimated that employees who were terminated or resigned because of their religious refusal of a COVID shot will receive approximately \$24,000 each, and employees who were forced to accept a COVID shot against their religious beliefs to keep their jobs will receive approximately \$3,700 each. In addition, employees who were terminated because of their religious refusal of the COVID shots will be eligible for

rehire if they apply within 90 days of final settlement approval by the court, and they will retain their previous seniority level. In fact, many previously terminated employees already have been rehired, and others will continue to be reinstated at NorthShore.

As a result of this settlement agreement, NorthShore has also changed its unlawful “no religious accommodations” policy to make it consistent with the law, and to provide religious accommodations in every position across its numerous facilities. No position in any NorthShore facility is considered off limits to unvaccinated employees with approved religious exemptions.

Liberty Counsel Vice President of Legal Affairs and Chief Litigation Counsel Harry Mihet said, “After many months and long hours, we are pleased to finally get the court’s final approval of this class-wide settlement for these health care workers who were unlawfully discriminated against and denied religious exemptions from the COVID shot mandate. This case should set a precedent for other employers who have violated the law by denying religious exemptions for their employees.”

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