



Terminated after disclosing disability at work

Type: Verdict-Plaintiff

Amount: \$200,000.00

State: California

Venue: Federal

Court: United States District Court, Northern District, San Francisco, CA

Injury Type(s): • *mental/psychological* - emotional distress

Case Type: • *Employment* - Retaliation; Wrongful Termination; Failure to Accommodate; Disability Discrimination
• *Discrimination* - Fair Housing Act

Case Name: Aaron Talamantes v. Costco Wholesale Corporation, No. 3:2024cv00789

Date: May 15, 2026

Plaintiff(s): • Aaron Talamantes, (Male, 0 Years)

Plaintiff Attorney(s): • Shelley A. Molineaux; Ratner Molineaux, LLP; Walnut Creek CA for Aaron Talamantes
• David S. Ratner; Ratner Molineaux, LLP; Walnut Creek CA for Aaron Talamantes
• Samvel ("Sam") Setyan; Setyan Law, APC; Pasadena CA for Aaron Talamantes

Defendant(s): • Costco Wholesale Corporation

Defense Attorney(s): • Justin T. Curley; Seyfarth Shaw LLP; San Francisco, CA for Costco Wholesale Corporation

Facts:

On Sept. 27, 2023, plaintiff Aaron Talamantes, who was a probationary front-end assistant, was terminated from his position by Costco Wholesale Corporation. Prior to this, Talamantes claimed he informed his managers of a prior physical disability on the job and that he asked for that he lived with post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and physical limitations from the prior physical injury. He claimed he requested the ability to take short breaks if he experienced a PTSD-related panic attack and restrictions on heavy lifting to avoid aggravating his physical injury. Talamantes claimed he provided two doctors' notes but was denied accommodation and was ultimately terminated from his position.

Talamantes sued Costco, alleging wrongful termination, as well as violations under California's Fair Employment and Housing Act, including disability discrimination, retaliation, failure to prevent discrimination or retaliation, failure to accommodate disability and failure to engage in a good faith process.

Talamantes suffered a prior ankle injury that required surgical hardware. He claimed he provided a doctor's note, which stated "No lifting. No heavy lifting." His counsel contended that his managers interpreted this note to mean Talamantes was incapable of lifting anything at all, not even a paper receipt and based on this interpretation, placed Talamantes on an immediate, unpaid leave of absence.

Approximately one week later, Talamantes provided a second doctor's note that cleared him to return to work without any restrictions but also mentioned that his ankle injury was still interfering with his ability to work. According to the plaintiff's counsel, Costco never followed up with Talamantes to clarify the note, or to discuss potential accommodations.

Defense counsel for Costco claimed the company was unaware of Talamantes' PTSD until after the decision to terminate him had been made.

Injury:

Talamantes was terminated from his position, an experience which he felt exasperated the emotional distress that he was already struggling with. He sought recovery for his past and future emotional distress, as well as sought punitive damages as a consequence of the defendant's alleged conduct.

Result:

The jury found for Talamantes on his claims and awarded him \$200,000.

Aaron Talamantes

Trial Information:**Judge:**

Richard G. Seeborg

Trial Length: 0

**Trial
Deliberations:** 0

Jury Vote: 12-0

**Editor's
Comment:** This report is based on information that was provided by plaintiff's counsel. Defense counsel did not respond to the reporter's phone calls.

Writer Priya Idiculla