



Civil Rights Department

651 Bannan Street, Suite 200 | Sacramento | CA | 95811
1-800-884-1684 (voice) | California's Relay Service at 711
calcivilrights.ca.gov | contact.center@calcivilrights.ca.gov

August 14, 2026

Via First Class Mail and Certified Mail

Agent for Service for: Kern County Department of Human Services

Julie Gragg
1115 Truxtun Avenue Fifth Floor
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Respondent(s):

Kern County Department of Human Services
100 E. California Ave
Bakersfield, CA 93307

RE: Notice of Filing of Discrimination Complaint – Response Requested

Case Number: 202601-33289228

Case Name: Ayon / Kern County Department of Human Services

Case Type: Employment

To All Listed Respondents:

Enclosed is a copy of a complaint filed with the Civil Rights Department (CRD). The enclosed complaint, which was filed under Government Code section 12960, alleges, unlawful discrimination and names you as a Respondent or Co-Respondent.

The CRD independently investigates and assesses the facts and legal issues in each case. The CRD uses the facts obtained through its investigation to determine if there is reasonable cause to believe that a law the department enforces has been violated.

Government Code Section 12940, subdivision (h), prohibits any retaliatory action against a person because he or she has filed a complaint, has opposed any practices forbidden under the Fair Employment and Housing Act, or has assisted in any proceeding before the CRD.

California Government Code section 12946 requires that all employment records (or union membership and referral records) be retained for a minimum of four (4) years. When a discrimination complaint has been served, the records must be kept until the CRD closes its inquiry and until any resulting lawsuit or appeal has been terminated.

You must submit a response to the questions below and to the supplemental questions attached within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of this letter.

1. State the legal name of your business and any other name(s) under which you do or have done business in California.
2. State your business address. Please note that you are required to notify the CRD in writing of any change of address and the effective date of such change while the complaint is under investigation and throughout any administrative adjudication. (California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 11013).
3. State type of legal business entity (i.e., corporation, partnership, limited partnership, sole proprietorship, etc.).
4. Does your company have a current contract(s) for the provisions of goods, services or public works with the State of California or receive federal funds? If so, name the awarding agency.
5. State the number of employees your business employs.
6. Provide your response to the allegations of the complaint including the facts that support your denial(s) or affirmative defense(s); the names, addresses, email addresses and telephone number(s) for any witnesses who have knowledge of your denial(s) or affirmative defense(s) and any physical or electronic documents, recordings or images related to your denial(s) or affirmative defense(s).

You can respond to this letter by:

- Using our online California Civil Rights System (CCRS). This is a three-step process:
 - Create an account for yourself at <https://ccrs.calcivilrights.ca.gov>. All you need is a valid email address and a phone number.
 - Email your assigned investigator (named below) or contact us at contact.center@calcivilrights.ca.gov and make reference to the Case #: **202601-33289228** to request that your account be associated to the complaint.
 - Log into your account. You will see the CRD case number in your list of Open Cases. Select Files, click on Upload New File, and select the files you wish to upload.
- Email. Send your response to your assigned investigator (named below) and to contact.center@calcivilrights.ca.gov. Include a copy of this letter and make reference to the Case #: **202601-33289228**.
- US mail. Send your response to: CRD Enforcement Division, 651 Bannon Street, Suite 200, Sacramento, CA 95811. Include a copy of this letter and make reference to the Case #: **202601-33289228**.

In appropriate cases, your assigned investigator may assist you in reaching an agreement to resolve this complaint. If you are interested in discussing a possible settlement of this complaint, please contact your investigator. Settlement discussions are confidential. However, discussions of facts or legal issues with you will not be considered part of a settlement discussion unless the CRD specifies in advance that a discussion is for this purpose.

Also, please be advised that the Department offers free mediation services. In appropriate cases, if you and the complainant agree to mediate and the Department approves, the complaint will be assigned to a mediator, who will contact you to schedule the mediation conference. All settlement discussions during the mediation process are confidential and not subject to disclosure. If you are interested in formal mediation, please contact the assigned investigator.

Sincerely,

Kathryn

Kathryn
Analyst I
510-963-3397
kathryn.3397@calcivilrights.ca.gov

Enclosures

CERTIFIED MAIL: 9589071052704407967031

Cc:
Kern County Department of Human Services
100 E. California Ave
Bakersfield, CA 93307

BY ORDER OF THE BD/SUPV
Referred To County Counsel
9 pages
mailed
Copies Furnished Risk Management
Human Resources
Date 8-21-26
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
By Michelle Fagan, Deputy

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Complainant: Evangelina Ayon

Respondent: Kern County Department of Human Services

File Date: August 13, 2026

1. Identify the person or persons designated to represent the company in this matter. Provide telephone contact number, email address, and mailing address for your representative(s).
2. Provide a statement of the employer's position with regard to the allegations contained in the complaint.
3. Provide copies of documents that support the employer's position regarding the allegations contained in the complaint.
4. Provide copies of the Complainant's entire personnel file.
5. Please provide a copy of Employee Handbook.
6. State the reason(s) complainant was terminated.
7. List the names of all persons involved in making the specific decisions to which the complainant objects. State each person's job title and responsibility as it relates to the issues raised by the complainant.
8. Provide all documentation to support your reasons for the termination, i.e., counseling notices, written reprimands, attendance records, etc.
9. Provide a copy of the policy which governed complainant's termination.
10. Provide a copy of any written notice(s) to Complainant regarding the termination and explain how the policy was applied to the complainant.
11. Describe your company's practices regarding discipline and dismissal of employees in Complainant's classification and work unit, including a description of the disciplinary steps required prior to termination for cause. Provide copies of any written policies.
12. State how this policy was applied to complainant.
13. Provide your policy on employees who are summoned for jury duty.

14. Provide a copy of the job description for complainant. If no written description exists, describe the duties and responsibilities.
15. State why the complainant was not selected for the position(s) and provide substantiating documentation supporting your reason(s).
16. Describe any requirements of the job that complainant did not meet.
17. Explain the selection process utilized in hiring for the position(s).
18. Provide a copy of any written job description. If no written description exists describe the qualifications and requirements for hire.
19. Provide copies of all interview notes, evaluation forms, internal correspondence, and rating sheets, generated in the selection process for the position(s).
20. Provide a copy of eligibility or ranking of candidates for the position in question.
21. Provide a copy of the employment application and resume for the complainant and the successful applicant(s). If this is a promotional position, provide performance reviews for the complainant and the successful applicant(s) for the past two years.
22. Provide a copy of the application, resume of the successful candidate, and, if the applicant was an employee, their performance evaluations for the last two years.
23. State why the successful candidate(s) was/were considered more qualified than the complainant, and provide substantiating documentation.

**COMPLAINT OF DISCRIMINATION UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE
CALIFORNIA FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING ACT****CASE NUMBER**

202601-33289228

EEOC NUMBER**COMPLAINANT**

Evangelina Ayon

ADDRESS325 Kern St
Shafter, CA 93263**PHONE**

(661) 237-9633

**TYPE OF DISCRIMINATION AND
LAW**

Government Code 12940

NAMED IS THE EMPLOYER, PERSON, AGENCY, ORGANIZATION OR GOVERNMENT
ENTITY WHO DISCRIMINATED AGAINST ME

RESPONDENT(S)Kern County Department of
Human Services**ADDRESS**100 E. California Ave
Bakersfield, CA 93307**PHONE**

(661) 631-6000

**NO. OF
EMPLOYEES**
501 or more

**COMPLAINT OF DISCRIMINATION UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE
CALIFORNIA FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING ACT****CASE NUMBER****EEOC NUMBER**202601-33289228

- Allegation 1 -**I ALLEGE THAT I EXPERIENCED**

Retaliation

ON OR BEFORE

January 23, 2026

BECAUSE OF MY ACTUAL OR PERCEIVED

Requested or used leave to serve on a jury or appear in court

AS A RESULT, I WAS SUBJECTED TO

Reprimanded; Terminated

PARTICULARS

I believe that I was reprimanded and terminated in retaliation for requesting or using leave to serve on a jury to appear in court. On or around January 13, 2026, I was notified that I had to report for jury duty on January 14, 2026. I notified my manager Elisa Benavides, telling her that I had to be in court by 10am. Ms. Benavides instructed me to report to work at 8am but I could not leave until 9:30am. Afraid I would be late due to travel and parking, I contacted Human Resources and Jennifer LNU told me that I did not have to report to work at all when I performed jury duty but if I went into work I could leave at 9am. She told me that she would communicate this to Ms. Benavides. While I served on jury duty for the next six days, Ms. Benavides texted me daily, asking why I was not at work and what my jury schedule was. When I returned to work on or around January 22, 2026, Ms. Benavides issued me a negative performance evaluation, indicating that I had fallen behind on my work. By that time, I only had one week left in my probationary period. I protested this evaluation, since I could not work while serving on the jury, and explained to Ms. Benavides that I was fulfilling my civil obligation. On or around January 23, 2026, I was asked to meet with Ms. Benavides and Doris Sons. Ms. Sons told me that I had two options: resign so I could be rehired by Respondent or be terminated and not ever be re-hirable. She told me that I had only five minutes to make my decision. Since I wanted to work for Respondent and wanted to be rehired, I chose to resign but did so under pressure.

- Allegation 2 -**I ALLEGE THAT I EXPERIENCED**

Retaliation

ON OR BEFORE

January 23, 2026

BECAUSE OF MY ACTUAL OR PERCEIVED

Reported or resisted any form of discrimination or harassment

AS A RESULT, I WAS SUBJECTED TO

Denied hire or promotion



COMPLAINT OF DISCRIMINATION UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING ACT

CASE NUMBER**EEOC NUMBER**202601-33289228

PARTICULARS

I believe I was denied hire in retaliation for objecting to discrimination. From around January 13, 2026, through January 21, 2026, I served on a jury in my county. My then-supervisor, Elisa Benavides, appeared to be upset that I was selected and required me to message her daily with my jury schedule. Around January 22, 2026, I was issued a negative performance evaluation, to which I objected, stating that I had simply been fulfilling my civil obligation and was unable to work during my time performing jury duty. Around January 23, 2026, Respondent gave me two options, resign and be eligible for rehire, or be terminated and no longer be eligible to work for Respondent. I chose to resign under pressure. From February 2026 through the present, I have applied to various positions with Respondent, but have not been offered a position, and have only been invited to interview for a few. I believe my previous management has influenced decision makers for these positions.

SIGNED UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY

By submitting this complaint I am declaring under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct of my own knowledge, except as to matters stated on my information and belief, and as to those matters I believe them to be true.

SIGNATURE OF COMPLAINANT OR COMPLAINANT'S LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE: DATE:


Evangelina Ayon (Aug 12, 2026 17:08:53 PDT)

08/12/2026



State of California
Civil Rights Department
Enforcement Division
651 Bannan Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95811
www.calcivilrights.ca.gov

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FIRST-CLASS



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Agent for Service for: Kern County Department of Hu
Julie Gragg
1115 Truxtun Avenue Fifth Floor
Bakersfield, CA 93301

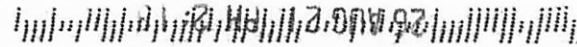
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Personal and Confidential: To be Opened by Addressee or Designee Only