

Amazon Seeks To Escape Pay, Promotion Bias Suit

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Amazon urged a Washington federal court to toss a proposed class action alleging it paid women less than male colleagues and limited their career opportunities, arguing the lawsuit is short on details and many of the claims belong in New York or California rather than the Evergreen State.

The e-commerce giant said Thursday that the court should dismiss claims brought in April under the Washington Equal Pay and Opportunities Act and the federal Equal Pay Act by Washington residents Gayatri Srinivas and Amy Cisneroz. The workers hadn't shown that comparable male co-workers were paid more or given more opportunities for advancement, Amazon argued.

Srinivas and Cisneroz filed their lawsuit after seeking to join a separate pay bias case, [Wilmuth et al v. Amazon.com Inc.](#), and they amended their complaint in June to add California residents Terisha Taylor and Melissa Sharp, as well as New York residents Rachel Walker and Caitlin Cordova.

Amazon argued Thursday, however, that the Californians' and New Yorkers' claims have no place in Srinivas and Cisneroz's lawsuit since their claims don't involve the Washington-based workers. Additionally, Amazon said that Taylor, Sharp, Walker and Cordova are seeking to represent different proposed classes from Srinivas and Cisneroz.

"The California and New York plaintiffs worked in different states, in different business lines, in different jobs, for different supervisors, and at different levels, and seek to certify different classes under different state laws, such that their claims indisputably require 'individualized attention,'" Amazon wrote. "Because the underlying laws, facts, and putative classes are different, there is no risk of inconsistent rulings if the claims of the California and New York plaintiffs are severed."

Amazon argued that the out-of-state workers' claims are also rife with other issues that prevent them from staying in court. For example, Taylor signed an arbitration agreement while

she was working for the company in Texas, and her claims need to be handled out-of-court, the company said.

But even if her claims weren't arbitrable, she filed many of her claims too late and failed to identify a comparable man who was paid better, according to the motion.

Amazon said the same timeliness issues plague many of Cordova's claims, and Sharp and Walker failed to demonstrate that the company blocked their career advancement because of their gender.

"Sharp alleges only that she inquired about an L6 promotion, that her supervisor was supportive but said there were no current opportunities, and that ... a man hired after Sharp into the same job title and family was promoted," the company wrote. "Sharp admits her supervisor was supportive of a promotion; she alleges no facts suggesting her supervisor was biased against her due to her gender."

Amazon said Sharp also hadn't plausibly alleged that the man who received the promotion was comparable to her, since she didn't mention anything about his qualifications and experience, whether she was qualified for the position he received or whether she even applied for the promotion.

Cassidy Clark, who is representing the workers, told Law360 in a statement that the workers "deserve the opportunity to have [their] claims heard on the merits in court."

"Despite its clear commitment that it would not require arbitration, particularly for discrimination claims, Amazon now seeks to do just that by asking the Court to compel Plaintiff's gender discrimination claims to arbitration," Clark said. "This litigation presents an important opportunity to advance workplace gender equity, ensure meaningful access to justice and hold employers accountable when women are paid less than men for their work. Amazon's motion is without merit, and we look forward to addressing it before the court."

Representatives of Amazon did not immediately respond to requests for comment Friday.

The workers are represented by Jahan C. Sagafi, Hannah C. Meropol, Sophia Jane Balkoski, Adam T. Klein, Cara E. Greene, Michael C. Danna, Zarka Shabir DSouza, Jenny Yang, Jennifer Davidson and Jon Ostrowsky of [Outten & Golden LLP](#); [Michael C. Subit](#) of [Frank Freed Subit & Thomas LLP](#); [Noreen Farrell](#), Catherine Bendor and Cassidy Clark of Equal Rights Advocates; and Cassandra Lenning of [Bibiyan Law Group PC](#).

Amazon is represented by Andrew E. Moriarty and Juliana Bennington of [Ashurst Perkins Coie](#), and Jason C. Schwartz, Molly T. Senger, Matt Gregory, Alex Bruhn and Lauren Blas of [Gibson Dunn & Crutcher LLP](#).

The case is Srinivas et al. v. Amazon.com Inc., case number [2:26-cv-01199](#), in the [U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington](#).

--Editing by Abbie Sarfo.