Flight Attendant With HIV Sues Delta for Prohibiting Marinol Use

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Jeffrey Walls, an HIV-positive flight attendant for Delta, is suing the airline for not allowing him to use cannabis-based Marinol, which is prescribed to treat nausea and weight loss, Courthouse News reports.

In the Federal Court case, Walls's lawyer John Scarpino said the Delta policy is an example of sexual orientation and HIV discrimination because the employees most likely to take Marinol would be those with HIV. He also found it suspicious that Delta does not prohibit other medicines that have the same possible side effects. Besides, Scarpino noted, Walls has never experienced any side effects from the medicine.

Walls tested positive in 1994 and said he has been taking synthetic cannabis for 20 years without any adverse effects. In 2012, after a random drug test showed marijuana in his system, Walls told Delta about his condition and was allowed to return to work. But in 2014, he was informed that Delta changed its policy and now prohibited Marinol.

Walls tried using other medications but says they caused migraines and drowsiness. In order to keep his job, he decided to forego Marinol, which led to weight loss and nausea; his doctor then recommended he go back on Marinol.

According to Courthouse News, Walls seeks an injunction to allow him to work while taking the med, and he seeks compensatory and punitive damages for disability discrimination and failure to accommodate.

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