Gregory Packaging Says Worker With HIV Posed No Safety Threat

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After settling a lawsuit over firing an employee for having HIV, Gregory Packaging Inc. released a statement with Lambda Legal acknowledging that the worker in its juice manufacturing facility posed no safety threat to co-workers or consumers.

The company said it dismissed Chanse Cox because it thought that was the required action according to federal rules that govern food manufacturing and communicable diseases. The company now understands that those regulations don't apply to HIV, which is not a food-borne illness.

In addition to the $125,000 compensation that resulted from the lawsuit filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Gregory Packaging is conducting training on disability discrimination at the Georgia plant where Cox worked.

"We are pleased with this result and are confident Gregory Packaging will never let this happen again," said Greg Nevins of Lambda Legal, an HIV and LGBT legal advocacy group, in the statement. "Indeed, Gregory Packaging's acknowledgement that Chanse poses no threat to the health and safety of others—and its willingness to take a public stand on behalf of people living with HIV—demonstrates its commitment to doing right by people with HIV in the future."

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