LUCE OBTAINS SUMMARY JUDGMENT IN DISCRIMINATION LAWSUIT

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On July 28, 2020, Judge Stephen R. Clark of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri granted a motion for summary judgement dismissing the discrimination and civil rights claims Nancy Woods brought against the Circuit Attorney's Office of the City of St. Louis and four individual Defendants. David H. Luce, a shareholder at Capes Sokol, represented the Defendants in the suit.

Background

Prior to her termination, Nancy Woods worked as a paralegal in the child support division of the Circuit Attorney's Office of St. Louis for twenty-eight years. In 2018, the Circuit Attorney terminated Woods for use of profanity, refusal to help, and inappropriate verbal confrontations in the workplace. After her termination, Woods filed a charge of discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and Missouri Commission on Human Rights.

In 2019, Woods filed a federal lawsuit that alleged claims of race discrimination, age discrimination, violations of federal civil rights laws and civil conspiracy. The lawsuit named the Office of the Circuit

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Attorney; Kimberly Gardner; Robert Steele, former First Assistant; Michael Warrick, former Chief of Staff; and Chief Clerk, Eula Simmons.

The Defendants' Motion for Summary Judgment was granted on July 28th. Regarding Wood's claims of age and race discrimination by Gardner:

> *"Woods has failed to show that Defendants' legitimate, non-discriminatory reasons for her termination were pretextual… Because this evidence fails to show pretext, Woods's age discrimination claims—like her race discrimination claims—fail at the final prong of the McDonnell Douglas analysis."*

The case is *Nancy Woods v. The Office of the Circuit Attorney of the City of St. Louis, et al.,* No. 4:19-CV-01401 (8th Cir. 2020)

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