

US sues Oracle alleging discrimination in pay

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The US Labor Department on Wednesday sued business software giant Oracle alleging "systemic" discrimination in pay against female, African American and Asian employees.

The administrative lawsuit also challenges Oracle's practice of "favoring Asian workers in its recruiting and hiring practices" for key technical jobs, saying it discriminates against non-Asian applicants.

The lawsuit is the result of an investigation begun in 2014 by the US agency's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, and could result in the loss of "millions" in US government contracts for Oracle, according to statement.

"Federal contractors are required to comply with all applicable anti-discrimination laws," said Thomas Dowd, acting director of the office.

"We filed this lawsuit to enforce those requirements."

The agency said Oracle refused to comply with the "routine requests for employment data and records," and that officials "attempted for almost a year to resolve Oracle's alleged discrimination violations before filing the suit."

California-based Oracle, one of the largest firms in Silicon Valley, said in a statement that the complaint "is politically motivated, based on false allegations, and wholly without merit."

The company said: "Oracle values diversity and inclusion, and is a responsible equal opportunity and affirmative action employer. Our hiring and pay decisions are non-discriminatory and made based on legitimate business factors including experience and merit."

The nine-page complaint said Oracle paid white makes more than their counterparts in the same job title.

It also said Oracle, which has some 45,000 employees in the United States and is known for its cloud computing and business applications, used a recruiting and hiring process which favored Asians, especially Indians, resulting in discrimination against African-American, Hispanic and white job applicants.

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