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Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Atousa Mafi, Plaintiff, v. Procel International Corporation, d/b/a Procel; Procel Temporary Services, Inc., and Does 1-10, Inclusive, Defendant.

Judge Florence Marie Cooper

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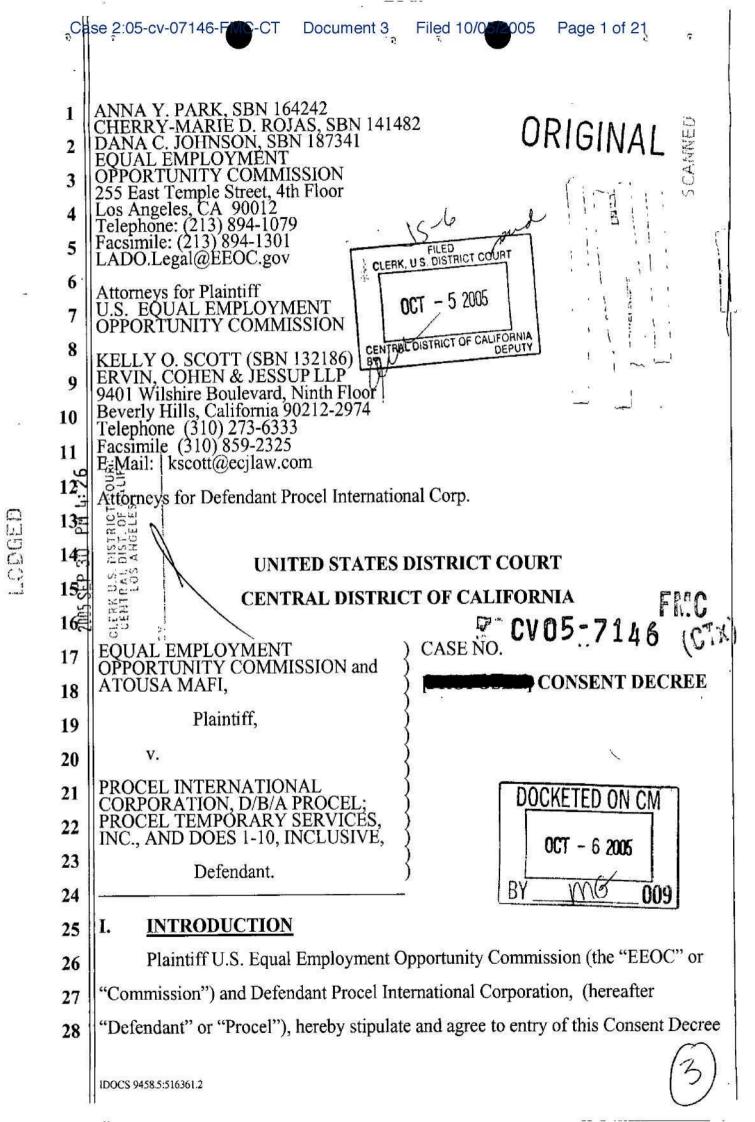
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Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Atousa Mafi, Plaintiff, v. Procel International Corporation, d/b/a Procel; Procel Temporary Services, Inc., and Does 1-10, Inclusive, Defendant.

Keywords

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Atousa Mafi, Procel International Corporation, Procel Temporary Services Inc., Does 1-10, CV05-7146, Consent decree / Settlement, Disparate Treatment, Termination, Hearing, Healthcare, Employment Law, ADAAA



to resolve the Commission's complaint, filed under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Title I of the Civil Rights Act of 1991 to correct allegations of unlawful employment practices on the basis of disability and to provide appropriate relief to Charging Party Atousa Mafi who claimed to have been adversely affected by such practices. PURPOSES AND SCOPE OF THE CONSENT DECREE II. The parties to this Consent Decree ("Decree") are the EEOC and A. Procel. This Decree shall be binding on and enforceable against Procel and its officers, directors, agents, successors and assigns.

- The parties have entered into this Decree for the following purposes: В.
 - To provide monetary and injunctive relief; 1.
- To ensure that Defendant's employment practices comply with 2. federal law;
- To ensure training for Procel's managers and employees with 3. respect to their obligations under the ADA;
 - To ensure that no one is subject to retaliation; 4.
- To provide an appropriate and effective mechanism for handling 5. requests for accommodation in the workplace; and
- To ensure Defendant's hiring practices comply with the ADA. 6. This Decree resolves all claims the EEOC has brought or could have brought against Procel arising out of this Complaint.

RELEASE OF CLAIMS III.

This Decree fully and completely resolves all issues, claims and allegations by the EEOC against Procel that are raised in the Complaint filed in this action in the United States District Court, Central District of California on 30, 2005 , captioned U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission v. Procel International Corporation, d/b/a Procel; Procel Temporary Services, Inc.; Case No. XXX XX-XXX (XXX) (the "Complaint").

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- Nothing in this Decree shall be construed to preclude any party from B. 1 bringing suit to enforce this Decree in the event that any party hereto fails to 2 perform the promises and representations contained herein. 3 Nothing in this Decree shall be construed to limit or reduce Procel's C. 4 obligation to comply fully with Title VII or any other federal employment statute. 5 This Decree in no way affects the EEOC's right to bring, process, 6 D. investigate or litigate other charges that may be in existence or may later arise 7 against Procel in accordance with standard EEOC procedures. 8 IV. JURISDICTION 9 The Court has jurisdiction over the parties and the subject matter of this 10 lawsuit. The Complaint asserts claims that, if proven, would authorize the Court to 11 grant the equitable relief set forth in this Decree. 12 This Decree conforms with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and 13 B. 14
 - Title VII and is not in derogation of the rights or privileges of any person.
 - The Court shall retain jurisdiction of this action during the duration of the Decree for the purposes of entering all orders, judgments and decrees that may be necessary to implement the relief provided herein.
 - The Terms of this Decree are fair, reasonable and just. D.

EFFECTIVE DATE AND DURATION OF DECREE V.

- The provisions and agreements contained herein are effective A. immediately upon the date which this Decree is entered by the Court ("the Effective Date").
- Except as otherwise provided herein, this Decree shall remain in effect B. for two (2) years after the Effective Date.

MODIFICATION AND SEVERABILITY VI.

This Decree constitutes the complete understanding of the parties with A. respect to the matters contained herein. No waiver, modification or amendment of

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any provision of this Decree will be effective unless made in writing and signed by an authorized representative of each of the parties.

- If one or more provisions of the Decree are rendered unlawful or B. unenforceable, the parties shall make good faith efforts to agree upon appropriate amendments to this Decree in order to effectuate the purposes of the Decree. In any event, the remaining provisions will remain in full force and effect unless the purposes of the Decree cannot, despite the parties' best efforts, be achieved.
- By mutual agreement of the parties, this Decree may be amended or C. modified in the interests of justice and fairness in order to effectuate the provisions of this Decree.

VII. COMPLIANCE AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- The parties expressly agree that if the Commission has reason to A. believe that Procel has failed to comply with any provision of this Consent Decree, the Commission may bring an action before this Court to enforce the Decree. Prior to initiating such action, the Commission will notify Procel and its legal counsel of record, in writing, of the nature of the dispute. This notice shall specify the particular provision(s) that the Commission believes Procel has breached. Absent a showing by either party that the delay will cause irreparable harm, Procel shall have thirty (30) days to attempt to resolve or cure the breach.
- The parties agree to cooperate with each other and use their best efforts В. to resolve any dispute referenced in the EEOC notice.
- After thirty (30) days have passed with no resolution or agreement to C. extend the time further, the Commission may petition this Court for resolution of the dispute, seeking all available relief, including an extension of the term of the Decree for such period of time as Procel is shown to be in breach of the Decree and the Commission's costs and attorneys' fees incurred in securing compliance with the Decree.

VIII. MONETARY RELIEF

In settlement of this lawsuit, Procel shall pay a total of \$130,000 payable to Atousa Mafi to resolve this action. Procel shall forward, via certified mail, a check to Mafi within five (5) days of the effective date of this Consent Decree. The \$130,000 settlement shall be designated as compensatory damages and not subject to state and federal withholding. Procel shall prepare and distribute 1099 tax reporting forms to the Charging Party. Within three (3) business days of the issuance of the settlement check, Procel shall submit a copy of the check and related correspondence to the Regional Attorney, Anna Y. Park, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 255 East Temple Street, 4th Floor, Los Angeles, CA. 90012.

IX. GENERAL INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

A. Non-Discrimination

Procel, its officers, agents, employees, successors, assigns and all persons in active concert or participation with it are enjoined for the duration of the Decree from discriminating against any individual because of his or her disability or failing to reasonably accommodate an individual with a disability.

B. Retaliation

Procel, its officers, agents, management (including all supervisory employees), successors, assigns, and all those in active concert or participation with them, or any of them, hereby agree not to engage in, implement or permit any action, policy or practice with the purpose of retaliating against any current or former employee or applicant of Procel, or either of them, because he or she has in the past, or during the term of this Decree: (a) opposed any practice made unlawful under the ADA; (b) filed a charge of discrimination alleging such practice; (c) testified or participated in any manner in any investigation (including without limitation, any internal investigation undertaken by Procel), proceeding in connection with this case and/or relating to any claim of an ADA violation; (d) was

identified as a possible witness or claimant in this action; (e) asserted any rights under this Decree; or (f) sought and/or received any relief in accordance with this Decree.

C. Posting

Within five (5) business days after the Effective Date and throughout the term of this Decree, Procel shall post notice (attached as Exhibit "A") of the terms of this Decree in at least three clearly visible locations frequented by employees at each of Procel's facilities. The notice shall remain posted for the duration of the Decree.

D. Equal Employment Opportunity Consultant

Within thirty days after the Effective Date, Procel shall retain an outside Equal Employment Opportunity Consultant ("Consultant") with demonstrated experience in the area of employment discrimination, hiring practices, and ADA accommodation issues, to implement and monitor Procel's compliance with the ADA and the provisions of this Decree. The Consultant shall be subject to the Commission's approval, which shall not be unreasonably withheld. If the Commission does not approve Procel's proposed Consultant, the Commission shall provide Procel with a list of at least three suggested candidates acceptable to the Commission. Procel shall bear all costs associated with the selection and retention of the Consultant and the performance of his/her/its duties. The Consultant's responsibilities shall include:

- 1. ensuring that the defendant develops an anti-discrimination policy addressing ADA issues, including but not limited to a prohibition against discrimination on the basis of disability, a prohibition against retaliation for engaging in activities protected under the ADA, and a description of the employer's obligation to reasonably accommodate persons covered under the ADA;
- ensuring that Procel's procedures to handle complaints of discrimination, harassment and retaliation comply with its obligations under this Decree;

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3. ensi	uring that Procel develops a reasonable accommodation
procedure whereby the	need for reasonable accommodation is identified, potenti
reasonable accommoda	tions are explored, and appropriate reasonable
accommodations are se	elected, which procedure shall require that all issues of
reasonable accommoda	ation be referred to the EEO Consultant for his/her direct
attention and resolution	ı;

- ensuring that Procel's anti-discrimination policy and reporting 4. procedure effectively carries out its obligations under this Decree;
- ensuring that managerial and office staff/hourly employees are trained on their rights and responsibilities under the ADA, including issues of accommodation;
- ensuring that all office employees are trained on policies and 6. procedures relating to the ADA and retaliation;
- monitoring all accommodation requests to ensure compliance 7. with the ADA;
- ensuring that Procel properly communicates with complainants regarding the complaint procedure, status of the complaint, investigation, results of the investigation, and any remedial action taken;
- ensuring that Procel's reports required by this Decree are 9. accurately compiled and timely submitted;
- ensuring that Procel's disciplinary policies hold office employees 10. and managers accountable for failing to take appropriate action and/or for engaging in conduct prohibited under this Decree;
- ensuring that Procel's hiring procedures comply with the ADA; 11. and
- further ensuring compliance with the terms of this Decree. 12. The Consultant shall ensure compliance of the foregoing provisions for the term of the Decree.

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Revision of Policies Concerning Discrimination and Harassment E.

Procel shall revise its policy on discrimination and sexual harassment, and provide a copy to the Commission within forty(40) days after the Effective Date 3 The revised policy shall include:

- A clear explanation of prohibited conduct;
- Assurance that employees who make complaints of harassment/ 2. discrimination or provide information related to such complaints will be protected against retaliation;
- A clearly described complaint process that provides accessible 3. and confidential avenues of complaint with contact information including name (if applicable), address, and telephone number of persons both internal (i.e., human resources) and external to Procel (i.e., Commission and outside Consultant available to handle complaints concerning high level company officials of Defendants' corporate hierarchy) to whom employees may report discrimination and retaliation, including a written statement that the employee may report the discriminatory behavior to designated persons outside their chain of management;
- Assurance that Procel will protect the confidentiality of 4. discrimination complaints or accommodation requests to the extent possible;
- A complaint process that provides a prompt, thorough, and 5. impartial investigation;
- A procedure for communicating with the complainant in writing 6. regarding the status of the complaint/investigation, results of the investigation, and any remedial action taken; and
- Assurance that Procel will take immediate and appropriate 7. corrective action when it determines that harassment/discrimination and/or retaliation has occurred.

EEOC shall comment on the policy within forty-five (45) days of receipt. Should the policy not require any revision, Procel shall confirm distribution of the policy no later than ten (10) days after the forty-five (45) day period. The policy shall be distributed in either English or Spanish, depending on the language preference of each employee, to all of Procel's employees, including management/supervisory staff, and shall be included in any relevant policy or employee manuals distributed to employees by Procel. Procel shall collect acknowledgments from each employee who receives the revised policy, in either English or Spanish depending on the language preference of each employee. Throughout the term of this Decree, Procel shall also post the revised policy, in English and Spanish, in a place that is conspicuous and accessible to all employees at each of its locations covered by this Decree in a legible font that is a minimum of 15 points in size.

F. Training

Within sixty (60) days after the Effective Date or thirty (30) days after hiring the Consultant, whichever is later, all of Procel's managerial/supervisory, human resources, and office staff/hourly employees shall be required to attend an intensive training program of at least four (4) hours for managerial employees and two (2) hours for office staff/hourly employees. The training shall be mandatory and occur once every year for the term of this Decree focusing on the requirements under the ADA, with an emphasis on hiring and accommodation requirements under the ADA. Each office staff/hourly employee shall be required to attend one training session each year, in a language that each employee best understands. Any managers/supervisors who failed to attend the training shall be trained within (30) days of the live training set forth above. Procel shall also provide an explanation of why certain employees, managers/supervisors, and human resource individuals failed to participate in the training and a proposal as to when these employees will be trained.

At a minimum, the non-discrimination training programs shall include the following:

- 1. instruction on the requirements of all applicable equal employment opportunity ("EEO") laws including, but not limited to the ADA hiring and accommodation responsibilities;
- a review of defendant's non-discrimination, non-retaliation and reasonable accommodation policies and of the specific requirements of this Decree;
 and
- training of management and human resources personnel in dealing with hiring, discrimination complaints, and reasonable accommodation requests.

The training of managerial employees shall additionally include training on how to recognize and prevent discrimination and/or retaliation, how to recognize requests for accommodation under the ADA, how to engage in the interactive process, and how to go about accommodating individuals with a disability.

For the remainder of the term of this Decree, all new office employees and all employees recently promoted from an office staff/hourly to a managerial position shall receive the managerial or office staff/hourly employee training, as appropriate, within thirty (30) days of hire or promotion.

After the initial training as specified above, all office employees and managers shall receive the training at least annually thereafter for the remainder of the term of this Decree.

All employees required to attend such training shall verify their annual attendance in writing.

Within forty-five (45) days after the Effective Date or fifteen (15) days after hiring the Consultant, whichever is later, Procel shall submit to the EEOC a description of the training to be provided and an outline of the curriculum developed for the trainees. Procel shall give the EEOC a minimum of ten (10) business days' advance written notice of the date, time and location of each training program provided pursuant to this Decree, and agrees that an EEOC representative may

the training provided by Procel in August of 2005 for compliance with this Decree (excluding those portions pertaining to notice to and possible attendance by the EEOC) and that, if approved, this training shall discharge Procel's initial training requirement under this Decree for those in attendance. In the event that the August training does not comply with the terms of this Decree, then Procel may postpone the initial training requirement set forth in this section up to one year and the training obligations of this Decree shall be extended a period equaling the length of any such postponement.

G. Performance Evaluations

For the upcoming review cycle, Defendant shall revise its performance evaluation forms for mangers and supervisors in order to include as measures for performance compliance with Procel's Anti-Discrimination and Retaliation Policies and Procedures.

At least thirty (30) days prior to implementing the performance evaluation forms described above, Defendant will provide the EEOC and the Consultant with the proposed revisions in order to provide an opportunity for comment regarding the revisions. EEOC will provide comments, if any, within 30 days of receipt of the proposed revisions. Defendant shall respond to such comments within fifteen (15) days of receipt. If the parties cannot agree on the proposed revisions, any disputes will be resolved according to the Dispute Resolution Procedures set forth herein.

H. <u>Complaint Procedure</u>

Within sixty (60) days of the Effective Date, Defendant shall develop an internal complaint procedure to provide for the filing, investigation and, if appropriate, remedying of complaints of discrimination or retaliation. Defendant shall provide a phone number that shall be disseminated to all Procel employees informing them that a complaint can be logged at any time. The phone calls shall be processed by the Consultant who will in turn monitor Procel's investigation, if

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- 12. An appeal procedure to an appropriate Defendant representative, should the complainant be dissatisfied with the results of the investigation; and
- discrimination may use the company's internal complaint procedure and/or may file charges with the EEOC or state or local Fair Employment Practice (FEP) agencies. The notice shall also state that filing an internal complaint does not relieve the complainant of meeting any applicable deadline for the filing of a charge or complaint with EEOC or state or local FEP agencies.
- I. Defendant may encourage resolution of internal complaints at a local level prior to investigation, but not require such informal resolution. A complainant shall not be required to first report the complaint to a person who is accused of the inappropriate conduct to invoke the Internal Complaint Procedure.
- J. The Internal Complaint Procedure will permit, but not require, an employee to initiate the complaint process by submitting a written complaint on a form designed for the purpose.
- K. Defendant will maintain a policy of nondiscrimination and equal treatment, including a policy of zero tolerance for unlawful discrimination, in all of its employment practices.
- L. The Internal Complaint Procedure is not intended to supplant the right of any employee to file a charge or complaint of discrimination or retaliation under any available municipal, state, or federal law.
- M. Defendant shall publish with the Internal Complaint Procedure the following elements that will be included in the procedure:
- A statement that it is unacceptable to retaliate against any associate for use of the Internal Complaint Procedure, for assisting in the investigation of a complaint, or for otherwise assisting in the utilization of the procedure.

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 - 2. A statement that if an allegation of discrimination or retaliation against a manager or other associate is substantiated, then such conduct will result in appropriate discipline, up to and including discharge.
 - N. Nothing herein shall apply to any hospital, clinic or other person or entity which seeks to retain or retains the nursing services of any person whose services are listed or offered through Procel. This Decree shall apply only to Procel and the facilities it directly owns and operates.

X. RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING

A. Reporting and Record Keeping

1. Document Preservation

For the duration of the Decree, Defendant agrees to maintain such records as are necessary to demonstrate their compliance with this Decree, including but not limited to the documents specifically identified below, and to verify that the reports submitted are accurate.

2. Reports

Initial Reporting: Within one-hundred twenty (120) days of the Effective Date of this Decree, Defendant shall provide the EEOC with the following:

- a. Its anti-disability discrimination, non-retaliation and reasonable accommodation policy;
- b. Proposed disability discrimination training programs for all of its employees, including the identities of the persons and/or organizations proposed to conduct the training; and
- c. Procedure for tracking complaints of disability
 discrimination, identifying the need for reasonable accommodation and processes by
 which potential accommodations are considered;

Subsequent Reports: On a semi annual basis for term of the Decree,
Defendant shall provide the EEOC with a report of the foregoing. The closing
period for the first report shall be six (6) months after the Effective Date of this

XI. COSTS OF ADMINISTRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSENT DECREE

Procel shall bear all costs associated with its administration and implementation of its obligations under this Consent Decree.

XII. COSTS AND ATTORNEYS' FEES

Each party shall bear its own costs of suit and attorneys' fees.

XIII. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

- A. During the term of this Consent Decree, Procel shall provide any potential successor-in-interest with a copy of this Consent Decree within a reasonable time of not less than thirty (30) days prior to the execution of any agreement for acquisition or assumption of control of any or all of Procel's facilities, or any other material change in corporate structure, and shall simultaneously inform the EEOC of same.
- B. During the term of this Consent Decree, Procel and its successors shall assure that each of its officers, managers and supervisors is aware of any term(s) of this Decree which may be related to his/her job duties.
- C. Unless otherwise stated, all notices, reports and correspondence required under this Decree shall be delivered to the attention of the Regional Attorney, Anna Y. Park, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Los Angeles District Office, 255 E. Temple St., 4th Fl., Los Angeles, CA. 90012.
- D. This Decree may be signed in counterparts. A facsimile signature shall have the same force and effect of an original signature or copy thereof.

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EXHIBIT A

NOTICE OF CONSENT DECREE

TO ALL EMPLOYEES OF PROCEL INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION, d/b/a PROCEL and PROCEL TEMPORARY SERVICES, INC.:

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC") filed a lawsuit in the United States District Court for the Central District of California entitled EEOC v. Procel International Corporation, d/b/a Procel; Procel Temporary Services, Inc. The lawsuit was brought by the EEOC on behalf of a deaf applicant and alleged that Procel refused to allow her an opportunity to be referred to work because of her disability.

Procel settled the federal lawsuit by entering into a two (2) year Consent Decree with the EEOC. You may obtain a copy of the Consent Decree at your expense. To obtain a copy, you must contact the Office of the U.S. District Court Clerk, Central District of California.

Among the terms of the Consent Decree, Procel must: post this Notice of Consent Decree in each of its facilities; pay the applicant an agreed-upon monetary settlement; retain an equal employment opportunity consultant; develop an anti-discrimination policy addressing, among other things, issues of disability discrimination, reasonable accommodation and complaint procedures; provide training to employees on discrimination issues; and report the progress of the foregoing to the EEOC.

If you feel that you have been discriminated against, harassed or subjected to a hostile environment in violation of federal anti-discrimination laws such as: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, which prohibits age discrimination; Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which prohibits employment discrimination against people with disabilities; or the Equal Pay Act of 1963 Act, which prohibits wage discrimination because of gender, you may seek assistance by filing a charge of discrimination with the EEOC at:

U.S. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION 255 East Temple Street, 4th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90012 TELEPHONE NUMBER: (800) 669-4000

In particular, if you feel that you have been retaliated against because of the filing of a charge of discrimination, giving testimony or assistance, or participating in any manner in any investigation, proceeding or hearing concerning discrimination, you should contact the EEOC. Further information about the EEOC is available on its web site at www.eeoc.gov.

THIS IS AN OFFICIAL NOTICE AND MUST NOT BE DEFACED BY ANYONE

This Notice shall remain posted in a clearly visible location frequented by employe	es at
Diversified's facilities for two years from the date upon which the Court signs this Notice.	

It is so ORDERED this	day of	, 2005.
		UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE