**Reasonable Accommodation for Employees and the Hardison Case: Balancing Religious Rights and Operational Needs**



Based on the notions of equitable treatment and non-discrimination in the workplace, reasonable accommodation for employees are a notion. To comply with the law, companies must offer reasonable accommodations so that people who follow certain religious tenets or with disabilities can fulfil their job tasks and be given the same possibilities for employment as other employees.

Reasonable accommodation aims to provide equal opportunities and ensure that individuals with religious beliefs or disabilities are not deprived in the workplace. This concept recognises that different individuals have diverse wants, and employers should try to accommodate those wants to a level that does not create noteworthy complications for the business.

**Reasonable Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities**

Reasonable accommodation for employees with disabilities may include providing assistive devices or technology, modifications to workstations, flexible work schedules, modifying job duties, making the workplace accessible, or flexible work schedules. These accommodations enable persons to perform their job tasks efficiently and partake fully in the workplace.

**Reasonable Accommodation for Employees with Religious Belief**

In the case of religious accommodations, employers are compulsory to make adjustments to allow employees to observe their spiritual practices. This may involve scheduling flexibility to accommodate religious holidays or observances, providing alternative duties that do not conflict with religious beliefs or allowing time for prayer or religious ceremonies.

It is vital to note that reasonable accommodation for employees does not mean providing an individual's idyllic situation or precise preference. Instead, it involves a proper adjustment that allows employees to achieve their job duties or observe their religious practices, deprived of imposing unwarranted privation on the employer.

**Hardison Case Summary and Supreme Court's Presiding and Key Issues**

Now let us emphasise the Hardison case outlined in the attached document. In this case, Larry G. Hardison, an employee at Trans World Airlines (TWA), requested accommodation for his religious beliefs as a Worldwide Church of God member. He sought Saturdays off to observe the Sabbath, which opposed his allocated work schedule.

TWA had initially made efforts to accommodate Hardison's request by scheduling adjustments and placing job substitutions. Nevertheless, due to the seniority system implemented through a collective-haggling arrangement with the union, providing Hardison with Saturdays off became stimulating. TWA contended that compromising the accommodation would have resulted in unwarranted adversity, as it would have required understaffing other operations, compromising the seniority system or paying premium wages.

The Court of Appeals held that TWA must rationally accommodate Hardison's religious needs. However, the Supreme Court disagreed with this ruling. The Supreme Court's decision accentuated several factors. That is:

1. The seniority system represented a significant accommodation for all secular and religious employees, as it minimised the instances when employees had to work on a day they favoured to have off. The system provided a reasonable and unbiased way of allocating work shifts.
2. TWA cannot be criticised for failing to work out a job swap or shift for Hardison. The union and TWA had decided to the seniority system, and the marriage was reluctant to make exceptions for Hardison.
3. Yielding Hardison Saturdays off would have trashed the rights of other senior employees under the collective-bargaining contract, leading to unsatisfactory conduct.
4. The Court of Appeals recommended replacements, such as paying premium wages or replacing Hardison on Saturdays with other available employees. However, the Supreme Court deemed these substitutions as striking more than a de minimis cost on TWA, which would constitute an unwarranted adversity.

Based on the strategies provided by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), it is reasonable to conclude that the Supreme Court's ruling in the Hardison case lines up with the clarification of reasonable accommodation. The EEOC guidelines emphasise that capacity should not impose significant difficulty or expense on the employer. In this case, accommodating Hardison's request would have obligatory substantial adjustments to the seniority system,  additional costs or potential understaffing, which would constitute undue hardship.

Balancing the business’s operational needs and protecting employees' rights to observe their religious practices is essential. The Supreme Court's presiding acknowledges the need for accommodation but also recognises that there are bounds to what employers can sensibly expect without causing unwarranted adversity.

In conclusion, reasonable accommodation is vital to preventing discrimination and equal opportunities in the workplace. However, it should be balanced with other employees' rights and the employer's operational constraints. The Supreme Court's ruling in the Hardison case mirrors a rational understanding of the law, considering the limitations faced by TWA in accommodating Hardison's religious wants while maintaining fairness and minimising unwarranted adversity.

https://youtu.be/YI-K4evCHY4

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