



CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

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DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL

Tuesday, July 22, 2025

Mr. Reginald Wilson

Re: **Reginald Wilson VS.
New Orleans Aviation Board
Docket Number: 9687**

Dear Mr. Wilson:

Attached is the decision of the City Civil Service Commission in the above-referenced appeal.

This is to notify you that, in accordance with the rules of the Court of Appeal, Fourth Circuit, State of Louisiana, the decision for the above captioned matter is this date - 7/22/2025 - filed in the Office of the Civil Service Commission at 1340 Poydras St. Suite 900, Orleans Tower, New Orleans, Louisiana.

If you choose to appeal this decision, such appeal must conform to the deadlines established by the Commission's Rules and Article X, Sec. 12(B) of the Louisiana Constitution. Further, any such appeal shall be taken in accordance with Article 2121 et. seq. of the Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure.

For the Commission,


Doddie K. Smith
Chief, Management Services Division

cc: Kevin Dolliole
Carl Butler
Jay Ginsberg
file

**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
CITY OF NEW ORLEANS**

**REGINALD WILSON,
Appellant**

Docket No. 9687

v.

**NEW ORLEANS AVIATION BOARD,
Appointing Authority**

DECISION

Appellant, Reginald Wilson, brings this race discrimination and sex discrimination appeal pursuant to Article X, § 8(B) of the Louisiana Constitution and this Commission's Rule II, § 4.6 seeking relief from the New Orleans Aviation Board's (NOAB) December 10, 2024, termination of his employment. (Ex. NOAB-3). At all relevant times, Appellant had probationary status as an Airport Technician II, working as a carpenter at the New Orleans Airport terminal. A Hearing Examiner, appointed by the Commission, presided over a hearing on February 18, 2025. At this hearing, both parties had an opportunity to call witnesses and present evidence. The hearing officer concluded the hearing based on Mr. Wilson's failure to show a *prima facie* case of race or sex discrimination.

The undersigned Commissioners have reviewed and analyzed the entire record in this matter, including the transcript from the hearing, all exhibits submitted at the hearing, the Hearing Examiner's report dated April 24, 2025, and controlling Louisiana law.

For the reasons set forth below, Mr. Wilson's appeal is DENIED.

I. FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Douglas McCrary, the manager of New Orleans Airport's terminal maintenance department, and Joachim Hackenbroch interviewed Mr. Wilson, an African-American male, for

both painter and carpenter positions. (Tr. at 91, 96-97; Ex. J-1 at paragraph 1). NOAB made a conditional offer of employment to Mr. Wilson on September 16, 2024, as Airport Technician II (Carpenter), and his first day of work was September 30, 2024. (Tr. at 13; Ex. NOAB-2). Another employee, Luis Fino, a Latino painter, also began work on the same day. (Tr. at 13, 64; Ex. J-1 at 4). Mr. Hackenbroch was both employees' immediate supervisor, and Mr. Hackenbroch reported to Mr. McCrary. (Tr. at 14; Ex. J-1 at paragraph 3). Mr. Hackenbroch also supervised Robert Lawson, an African-American male employee, and Eric, a Caucasian male employee. (Tr. at 64, 75-76). When questioned about his race discrimination appeal, Mr. Wilson testified that "everybody was treated better than me: Robert, Julio, and Eric." (Tr. at 75-76).

When transporting Mr. Wilson and Mr. Fino on September 30, Mr. Hackenbroch inquired about each employee's marital status. (Tr. at 19-20). When both Mr. Wilson and Mr. Fino said they were not married, Mr. Hackenbroch said they must be partners. (Tr. at 21-22).

Mr. Wilson reported this comment to Mr. McCrary on October 25, 2024, during a meeting among Mr. Wilson, Mr. Hackenbroch, and Mr. McCrary about Mr. Wilson's work performance. (Tr. at 22-23). Mr. McCrary stated that Mr. Hackbroch needed to do a better job of ensuring Mr. Wilson felt he was treated fairly. (Tr. at 29). Mr. McCrary testified that he counseled Mr. Hackbroch about his comment suggesting that Mr. Wilson and Mr. Fino were a couple. (Tr. at 100). Mr. McCrary testified Mr. Hackenbroch apologized. (Tr. at 100).

Mr. Wilson alleges that Mr. Hackenbroch said Mr. Wilson was ignorant, a liar, and incompetent. (Tr. at 24). Mr. Wilson testified he believed these comments were based on his race. (Tr. at 74).

On November 15, 2024, Mr. Wilson, Mr. McCrary, Mr. Hackenbroch, and representatives from Human Resources met about the quality of Mr. Wilson's work as a carpenter. (Tr. at 47, 56).

Mr. McCrary testified that Mr. Hackbroch complained about the quality of Mr. Wilson's work and how slowly he completed tasks. (Tr. at 99).

NOAB terminated Mr. Wilson's employment on December 10, 2024. (Ex. NOAB-3).

II. ANALYSIS

A. Standard for Sex Discrimination Appeal

Mr. Wilson has failed to carry his burden of proof to show sex discrimination under Civil Service Rule II, § 4.8. In disciplinary actions where the classified employee alleges discrimination, the burden of proof on appeal, **as to the factual basis for the discrimination**, is on the employee. La. Const. art. X, § 8(B); *East v. Office of Inspector Gen.*, 2011-0572 (La. App. 4 Cir. 2/29/12), 87 So. 3d 925, 927 (quoting *Goins v. Dep't of Police*, 570 So.2d 93, 94 (La. App. 4 Cir.1990)). *See also* Civil Service Rule II, §§ 4.6, 4.8.

1. *McDonnell Douglass* burden-shifting

a. *Prima facie* case of race discrimination

Because Mr. Wilson has not offered any direct evidence of race discrimination, the Commission applies the *McDonnell Douglass* burden-shifting framework. In order to show a *prima facie* case of race discrimination under the *McDonnell Douglass* framework, Wilson must show that (1) he is a member of a protected class; (2) he was qualified for his position; (3) he suffered an adverse employment decision; and (4) similarly situated non-African-American employees were treated more favorably. *Richardson v. New Orleans Police Dep't*, 2024-0556 (La. App. 4 Cir. 3/31/25), 2025 WL 957461 (citing *Guidry v. Glazer's Distributors of Louisiana, Inc.*, 2010-218 (La. App. 3 Cir. 11/3/10), 49 So. 3d 586, 590–91)).

Mr. Wilson has shown that he is a member of a protected class and that he suffered an adverse employment action. Mr. Wilson has failed to show that similarly situated non-African-American employees were treated more favorably. Mr. Wilson testified that all the other employees under Mr. Hackenbroch's supervision were treated more favorably, including an African-American employee, Robert Lawson. (Tr. at 76).

Because Mr. Wilson is unable to show that only non-African-American employees were treated more favorably, he has failed to state a *prima facie* case of race discrimination under *McDonnell Douglass*.

b. *Prima facie* case of sex discrimination

Mr. Wilson's sex discrimination appeal rests on one insensitive and inappropriate comment made by Mr. Hackenbroch suggesting that Mr. Wilson and Mr. Fino were a couple. "Comments are evidence of discrimination only if they are (1) related to the protected class of persons of which the plaintiff is a member; (2) proximate in time to the complained-of adverse employment decision; (3) made by an individual with authority over the employment decision at issue; and (4) related to the employment decision at issue." *Gautreau v. EnLink Midstream Operating GP, LLC*, 2021-0796 (La. App. 1 Cir. 5/25/22), 342 So. 3d 939, 950, *writ denied sub nom. Gautreau v. EnLink Midstream Operating, LLC*, 2022-01010 (La. 10/12/22), 348 So. 3d 68. No evidence exists that Mr. Hackenbroch's comment on September 30, 2024, was related to the employment decision on December 10, 2024. So, this comment is a "stray remark." *Id.* No direct evidence exists of sex discrimination.

Applying the *McDonnell Douglass* burden-shifting framework to Mr. Wilson's sex discrimination claim, Mr. Wilson has failed to state a *prima facie* case because he has offered no

evidence similarly situated female comparators who were treated more favorably. *See Richardson*, 2025 WL 957461 at *3.

To the extent Mr. Wilson alleges that Mr. Hackenbroch regarded him and Mr. Fino as exhibiting behaviors or characteristics tolerable in a female employee, Mr. Fino's continued employment undercuts this allegation.

Therefore, Mr. Wilson has failed to state a *prima facie* case of race discrimination or sex discrimination. Mr. Wilson's appeal is DENIED.

WRITER:



[Ruth Davis \(Jul 21, 2025 18:00 CDT\)](#)

RUTH DAVIS, COMMISSIONER

CONCUR:



[Brittney Richardson \(Jul 21, 2025 14:52 CDT\)](#)

BRITTNEY RICHARDSON, CHAIRPERSON



[John Korn \(Jul 21, 2025 14:22 CDT\)](#)

JOHN KORN, VICE-CHAIRPERSON