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**EEOC REPORTS INCREASE IN DISCRIMINATION CHARGES**

On February 6, 2003, the EEOC reported that charges of employment discrimination in the private sector during fiscal year 2002, which ended on September 30, 2002 increased 4.5% from the previous year, resulting in the most charges filed in seven years. The largest increases involved allegations of religious discrimination (up 21%), age discrimination (up 14.5%), and national origin discrimination (up 13%). Race discrimination allegations increased a moderate 3.5%, while sex/gender charges and retaliation allegations increased only 1.6% and 2%, respectively. Only disability discrimination allegations decreased during the same period (down 3%). Allegations of Equal Pay Act violations remained unchanged.

The EEOC also reported that during the same period, the average time taken by the EEOC to process discrimination charges declined to 171 days (down 6%).

Finally, the EEOC reported that during fiscal year 2002, it recovered a record of \$310.5 million in monetary awards for claimants, an increase of 6% from the previous year. According to the EEOC, one out of every five charges filed results in a favorable outcome for the charging party. This figure is consistent with the EEOC's more aggressive approach to mediation in recent years.

The new EEOC statistics can be found at <http://www.eeoc.gov>.



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