

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF IOWA
IN AND FOR SCOTT COUNTY

FILED

2018 DEC -5 PM 4:24

CAMELLIA POHL,

Plaintiff,

vs.

CITY OF DAVENPORT, IOWA

Defendant.

NO. LACE128300

CLERK OF DISTRICT COURT
SCOTT COUNTY, IOWA

Members of the Jury:

In this case Plaintiff, Camellia Pohl, claims Defendant, City of Davenport, wrongfully terminated her employment in retaliation against her because she pursued a workers' compensation claim against the City of Davenport. Plaintiff further claims she sustained damages as a result of the wrongful termination.

Defendant, City of Davenport, denies that it wrongfully terminated Plaintiff's employment and that it was the cause of her damages.

Do not consider this summary as proof of any claim. Decide the facts from the evidence and apply the law which I will now give to you.

INSTRUCTION NO. 1

You shall base your verdict only upon the evidence and these instructions.

Evidence is:

1. Testimony in person or by deposition.
2. Exhibits received by the court.
3. Stipulations which are agreements between the attorneys.
4. Any other matter admitted (e.g. answers to interrogatories, matters which judicial notice was taken, and etc.).

Evidence may be direct or circumstantial. The weight to be given any evidence is for you to decide.

Sometimes, during a trial, references are made to pre-trial statements and reports, witnesses' depositions, or other miscellaneous items. Only those things formally offered and received by the court are available to you during your deliberations. Documents or items read from or referred to which were not offered and received into evidence, are not available to you.

The following are not evidence:

1. Statements, arguments, questions and comments by the lawyers.
2. Objections and rulings on objections.
3. Any testimony I told you to disregard.
4. Anything you saw or heard about this case outside the courtroom.

INSTRUCTION NO. 2

You will decide the facts from the evidence. Consider the evidence using your observations, common sense and experience. You must try to reconcile any conflicts in the evidence; but, if you cannot, you will accept the evidence you find more believable.

In determining the facts, you may have to decide what testimony you believe. You may believe all, part or none of any witnesses' testimony.

There are many factors which you may consider in deciding what testimony to believe, for example:

1. Whether the testimony is reasonable and consistent with other evidence you believe;
2. The witnesses' appearance, conduct, age, intelligence, memory and knowledge of the facts; and,
3. The witnesses' interest in the trial, their motive, candor, bias and prejudice.

INSTRUCTION NO. 3

Whenever a party must prove something they must do so by the preponderance of the evidence.

Preponderance of the evidence is evidence that is more convincing than opposing evidence.

Preponderance of the evidence does not depend upon the number of witnesses testifying on one side or the other.

INSTRUCTION NO. 4

During this trial, you have heard the word "interrogatory." An interrogatory is a written question asked by one party of another, who must answer it under oath in writing. Consider interrogatories and the answers to them as if the questions had been asked and answered here in court.

INSTRUCTION NO. 5

You have heard evidence claiming certain witnesses made statements before this trial while under oath which were inconsistent with what the witness said in this trial. If you find these statements were made and were inconsistent, then you may consider them as part of the evidence, just as if they had been made at this trial.

You may also use these statements to help you decide if you believe the witnesses. You may disregard all or any part of the testimony if you find the statements were made and were inconsistent with the testimony given at trial, but you are not required to do so. Do not disregard the trial testimony if other evidence you believe supports it, or if you believe it for any other reason.

INSTRUCTION NO. 6

The fact that Defendant City of Davenport is a municipality should not affect your decision. All persons are equal before the law, and municipalities are entitled to the same fair and conscientious consideration by you as any other person.

INSTRUCTION NO. 7

You may not return a verdict for Plaintiff Camellia Pohl just because you might disagree with Defendant City of Davenport's decision to terminate her or if you believe the decision to be harsh or unreasonable.

INSTRUCTION NO. 8

There is evidence that Pohl was an employee at will. An employee at will may be terminated at any time for any reason, except if it is contrary to the public policy of this state. It is against the public policy of the state to discharge an employee for pursuing workers' compensation benefits.

INSTRUCTION NO. 9

Pohl must prove all of the following propositions:

1. Pohl was an employee of the City of Davenport.
2. The City of Davenport discharged Pohl from employment.
3. Pohl's pursuit of workers' compensation benefits was the determining factor in the City of Davenport's decision to discharge Pohl.
4. The discharge was a cause of damage to Pohl.
5. The nature and extent of the damage.

If Pohl has failed to prove any of these propositions, she is not entitled to damages. If Pohl has proved all of these propositions, she is entitled to damages in some amount.

INSTRUCTION NO. 10

You may find that Pohl's pursuit of workers' compensation benefits was a determining factor in the City of Davenport's decision to discharge her if it has been proved that the City of Davenport's stated reason for its decision is not the real reason, but is a pretext to hide retaliation.

INSTRUCTION NO. 11

The fact that I am instructing you on the proper measure of damages should not be considered as an indication that I have any view as to whether any party is entitled to your verdict in this case. Instructions as to the measure of damages are given only for your guidance in the event that you should find that Pohl is entitled to damages in accord with the other instructions.

If you find that Pohl has met her burden on her wrongful discharge claim, then you must award her such sum as you find by the greater weight of the evidence will fairly and justly compensate her for any damages that you find were proximately caused to her by the conduct of City of Davenport. An act is a "proximate cause" of damage if the act was a substantial factor in producing the damage and the damage would not have happened except for the act. "Substantial" means that the act had such an effect in producing damage as to lead a reasonable person to regard it as a cause of the damage.

Remember that, throughout your deliberations, you must not engage in any speculation, guess, or conjecture. Your judgment must not be exercised arbitrarily or out of sympathy or prejudice for or against any of the parties. You must award the full amount of damages, if any, that Pohl proved by the preponderance of the evidence. However, the amount you assess for damages must not exceed the amount proximately caused by the wrongful conduct of the City of Davenport as proved by the evidence. Also, do not allow any amount awarded for one item of damages on a particular claim to be included in any amount awarded for any other item of damages on that claim, because Pohl is not entitled to recover duplicate damages.

Attached to these Instructions is a Verdict Form, which you must fill out. In the "Damages" sections of the Verdict Form, you should only award those damages, if any, that Pohl has proved by the preponderance of the evidence were proximately caused by City of Davenport's wrongful conduct toward her.

Instruction No. 12

Pohl seeks damages for back pay. "Back pay" is defined as the amount of any wages and fringe benefits that Pohl would have earned from the date her employment with City of Davenport ended until the date of your verdict, minus the wages and fringe benefits, if any, that she actually did earn during that time from other employment after her job with City of Davenport ended.

INSTRUCTION NO. 13

Pohl seeks damages for emotional distress. Emotional distress may include anxiety, humiliation, loss of self-esteem and loss of enjoyment of life. The amount you assess for emotional distress damages cannot be measured by any exact or mathematical standard. You must use your sound judgment based on an impartial consideration of the evidence. Your judgment must not be exercised arbitrarily or out of sympathy or prejudice, for or against the parties.

Instruction No. 14

My duty is to tell you what the law is. Your duty is to accept and apply this law.

You must consider all of the instructions together because no one instruction includes all of the applicable law.

The order in which I give these instructions is not important.

Your duty is to decide all fact questions.

As you consider the evidence, do not be influenced by any personal sympathy, bias, prejudices or emotions. Because you are making very important decisions in this case, you are to evaluate the evidence carefully and avoid decisions based on generalizations, gut feelings, prejudices, sympathies, stereotypes, or biases. The law demands that you return a just verdict, based solely on the evidence, your reason and common sense, and these instructions. As jurors, your sole duty is to find the truth and do justice.

Instruction No. 15

You may not communicate about this case before reaching your verdict. This includes cell phones, and electronic media such as text messages, Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, email, etc.

Do not do any research or make any investigation about this case on your own. Do not visit or view any place discussed in this case, and do not use Internet maps or Google Earth or any other program or device to search for or to view any place discussed in the testimony. Also, do not research any information about this case, the law, or the people involved, including the parties, the witnesses, the lawyers, or the judge. This includes using the Internet to research events or people referenced in the trial.

This case will be tried on evidence presented in the courtroom. If you conduct independent research, you will be relying on matters not presented in court. The parties have a right to have this case decided on the evidence they know about and that has been introduced here in court. If you do some research or investigation or experiment that we do not know about, then your verdict may be influenced by inaccurate, incomplete or misleading information that has not been tested by the trial process, including the oath to tell the truth and by cross-examination. All of the parties are entitled to a fair trial, rendered by an impartial jury, and you must conduct yourself so as to maintain the integrity of the trial process. If you decide a case based on information not presented in court, you will have denied the parties a fair trial in accordance with the rules of this state and you will have done an injustice. It is very important that you abide by these rules.

It is important that we have your full and undivided attention during this trial.

Instruction No. 16

Upon retiring you shall select a foreman or forewoman. It will be his or her duty to see discussion is carried on in an orderly fashion, the issues are fully and freely discussed, and each juror is given an opportunity to express his or her views.

Your attitude at the beginning of your deliberations is important. It is not a good idea for you to take a position before thoroughly discussing the case with the other jurors. If you do this, individual pride may become involved and you may later hesitate to change an announced position even if shown it may be incorrect. Remember you are not partisans or advocates, but are judges - judges of the facts. Your sole interest is to find the truth and do justice.

Instruction No. 17

During the trial, you have been allowed to take notes. You may take these with you to the jury room to use in your deliberations. Remember, these are notes and not evidence. Generally, they reflect the recollection or impressions of the evidence as viewed by the person taking them, and may be inaccurate or incomplete.

Upon reaching a verdict, leave the notes in the jury room and they will be destroyed.

Instruction No. 18

I am giving you a verdict form. During the first six hours of deliberations, excluding meals and recesses outside your jury room, your decision must be unanimous. If you all agree, the verdict must be signed by your foreman or forewoman.

After deliberating for six hours from 11 o'clock 18th m. excluding meals or recesses outside your jury room, then it is necessary that only seven of you agree upon the answers to the questions. In that case, the verdict must be signed by all seven jurors who agree.

When you have agreed upon the verdict and appropriately signed it, tell the Court Attendant.