

Wal-Mart Agrees to Settle Same-Sex Benefits Case for \$7.5 Million

December 8, 2016

On December 2, the parties in the matter of *Cote v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.* filed a motion in the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts asking the court to approve a proposed class action settlement agreement. In 2015, an employee filed suit alleging that Wal-Mart discriminated against her and other similarly situated employees by not providing employees' same-sex spouses with the same benefits as opposite-sex spouses. Prior to January 1, 2014, Wal-Mart did not extend health care benefits to same-sex spouses of its employees. In the proposed settlement agreement, Wal-Mart denied any wrongdoing and agrees to pay \$7.5 million to Wal-Mart's current and former employees whose same-sex spouses incurred medical expenses that could have been covered under Wal-Mart's health plan prior to 2014 if coverage had been offered to same-sex spouses. A copy of the proposed settlement is available [here](#).