



## U.S. Bank Fired Employee for Telling Customers to “Have a Blessed Day”

A Kentucky bank teller has filed suit against her employer after she was fired for telling customers to “have a blessed day.”

According to the [Christian News Network](#), Polly Neace offered the light-hearted phrase to customers for some two years before the U.S. Bank branch in Walton, Kentucky, hit her with a Code of Ethics violation in 2011, claiming that several customers had complained about the greeting because of its religious flavor.



“While you are entitled to your beliefs and we support that, you may not proselytize those beliefs in the workplace,” the bank demanded in its written warning to Neace. “Effective immediately, you will no longer discuss the subject of faith or religion with customers or co-workers.”

Additionally, Neace was warned that “religious items must be removed from the teller line where [they] can be seen by customers.”

Several months later, Neace recalled, she was reprimanded again when she responded to a drive-through customer’s “God Bless You” with, “Thank you. God bless you, too.”

For her part, Neace insisted that no one had ever said anything negative about her harmless blessings. “I say ‘Have a blessed day’ all of the time,” Neace told a local news reporter. “I don’t think there’s any better kind of day you can have than a blessed day.”

The bank also accused Neace of confronting a customer for taking God’s name in vain, and for supposedly sharing her Christian faith with the customer.

Neace’s lawsuit was filed after she was fired in 2012 when, “in expressing concern about another matter,” reported the Christian News Network, “she commented that she ‘might as well go ahead and tell customers [to] have a blessed day.’” That comment, made in jest, apparently prompted the bank to terminate her employment the next day.

Neace’s lawsuit against U.S. Bank notes that Kentucky state law “prohibits an employer from discriminating against a person on the basis of his or her religion and, further, protects the employee from retaliation for complaining about discrimination on the basis of his or her religion.”

The suit argues that U.S. Bank “violated the public policy of Kentucky in wrongfully discharging plaintiff on the basis of her religious beliefs and/or retaliation against plaintiff for her complaints about religious discrimination.”

While providing no specifics from the case, U.S. Bank said in a statement that Neace’s suit was “without merit,” insisting that “we hold our employees to high ethical standards when interacting with customers and co-workers, and take violations of these standards seriously.”

Interestingly, Neace had been employed by the U.S. Bank branch for 24 years, and received a positive



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on July 17, 2014

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performance evaluation from her supervisor just months before being terminated.

Attorney Blankenship said that the lawsuit is all about the bank's violation of Neace's First Amendment guarantees. "The proof in the record has shown that Polly was discharged because she insisted upon the right to say 'have a blessed day.'"



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