

# The Journal Gazette

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## **JGCOURTS** **(/NEWS/LOCAL/COURTS/)**

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February 16, 2016 1:03 AM

# **Plaintiff claims clinic fired her over pregnancy**

**REBECCA S. GREEN | The Journal Gazette**

A non-profit dental clinic in LaGrange County faces a federal lawsuit accusing the clinic of terminating a receptionist because she became pregnant.

Filed late last week in the U.S. District Court by Tara Speicher, the lawsuit accuses Community Dental Clinic Inc. in Topeka of discriminating against her by violating the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Speicher retained the Indianapolis-based law firm DeLaney & DeLaney, which successfully represented a former teacher at a local Catholic school in a discrimination case against the Roman Catholic Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend in late 2014.

On Monday, officials at the Community Dental Clinic declined to comment, saying they were not aware of the lawsuit.

According to court documents, Speicher was employed as a receptionist at the clinic from April 2013 until she was terminated Dec. 1, 2014.

Speicher alleges the office manager asked her if she was pregnant during her initial job interview. Speicher became pregnant in January 2014, according to court documents.

She had not planned to share news of her pregnancy with her employer during the first few months of her pregnancy, but after feeling “pressured” to explain reasons for her doctor’s appointments, Speicher told them in mid-April, according to court documents.

The development of gestational diabetes required additional doctor’s appointments for Speicher, which resulted in complaints from her supervisor, according to court documents. In September 2014, the clinic hired another receptionist and had Speicher train her.

On Dec. 1, 2014, Speicher thought she went into labor and left work. When she found out she was not in labor, she tried to return to work, having been cleared by her doctor, but was not permitted to do so, according to court documents.

Speicher never returned to work. After she gave birth to her child, she tried to go back to Community Dental in mid-February 2015 but was “laid off” and replaced by the receptionist she had trained, according to court documents.

She alleges she was told that a meeting had been held and it was decided it would be better to “lay her off because she just had a baby,” according to court documents.

According to the lawsuit, Speicher is alleging violations of the pregnancy discrimination act, sex discrimination and violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

She is seeking compensatory damages, punitive damages and costs, according to court documents.

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