1 2 3 4 5 6 IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON 7 AT SEATTLE 8 EUXUCINA GIRTON, individually, 9 No. 2:24-cv-01929 Plaintiff, 10 COMPLAINT v. 11 AND JURY DEMAND WALMART INC., a Delaware for-profit 12 corporation, 13 Defendant. 14 15 COMES NOW the Plaintiff, Euxucina "Zeana" Girton, by and through her attorneys, 16 and alleges as follows: 17 I. **PARTIES** 18 1.1 Plaintiff, EUXUCINA GIRTON, ("Plaintiff") is a single individual who 19 resides in the State of Washington. 20 1.2 Defendant WALMART INC. ("Defendant") is a for profit company 21 incorporated in the State of Delaware with its primary place of business in the State of 22 Arkansas. Its registered agent in the State of Washington is CT Corporation System, 711 23 Capital Way S, Ste 204, Olympia, WA 98501 24 25 COMPLAINT – Page 1

2

4

3

5

67

8

9

10

11

12

13

1415

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

II. JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 2.1 This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331, because this complaint contains claims arising under federal law. This Court also has supplemental jurisdiction over the related state law claims pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367.
- 2.2 This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant as it conducts business in Washington and employed Plaintiff in Washington.
- 2.3 Venue is appropriate in the Western District of Washington pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2) as the acts or omissions giving rise to the claims occurred in this district. The Seattle division is appropriate pursuant to LCR 3(d)(1) as the acts or omissions occurred in Island County.

III. FACTUAL BACKGROUND

These factual allegations are not intended to be exhaustive in nature and are written solely to provide notice to Defendant of the general nature of Plaintiff's claims.

- 3.1 Defendant Walmart Inc is one of the largest companies in the world, employing more than two million people and operating more than 10,000 stores.
 - 3.2 Walmart received revenues in excess of \$600 billion in FY 2023.
 - 3.3 Walmart earned a gross profit in 2023 in excess of \$140 billion.
 - 3.4 Plaintiff is a 71-year-old Black woman.
- 3.5 Plaintiff worked for Walmart's Oak Harbor store from October 29, 2020 until February 15, 2023. She was initially hired as a Customer Service employee at \$15.00 an hour and usually worked around 40 hours a week.

 $COMPLAINT-Page\ 2$

- 3.6 As a Customer Service employee, she assisted customers at the customer service counter with check cashing, Western Union transactions, and other services. She also received health benefits, a 401k, and employee stock options.
- 3.7 During her employment, Plaintiff was twice passed over for promotion in favor of younger white males. Plaintiff worked as an "acting" team lead for eight months, on an intermittent basis, beginning in March 2022. In this capacity, she was given added responsibilities without any commensurate increase in pay. During this time, two white men were selected for promotion and Plaintiff trained them to be team leads, while Plaintiff remained in her "acting" classification.
- 3.8 At the end of March 2022, Plaintiff applied for an open Team Lead position. Plaintiff lost the position to Josh, a white man. When she asked why she did not get the position, Plaintiff was told by the Front-End Coach, Ashika Singh (a South Asian woman) that it was safer having a "man" up front. Ms. Singh told Plaintiff to apply next time, and she would get the lead position. Meanwhile, Ms. Singh asked her to train Josh to do the job Plaintiff was already performing. Plaintiff trained Josh for two weeks then he declined the promotion and returned to the Garden Department.
- 3.9 When Josh gave up the lead position, the position was relisted. Ms. Singh told Plaintiff to apply. Plaintiff applied and this time the position was awarded to Kevin, another white man. Plaintiff trained Kevin as well. During his training, Kevin also declined the position and went back to being a cashier. Plaintiff continued filling the team lead position without receiving a promotion or a pay increase.
- 3.10 In January 2023, Ms. Singh gave Plaintiff a promotion to temporary Team

 Lead. Plaintiff complained that it took Walmart eight months to promote her while she was

 COMPLAINT Page 3

an acting team lead and that she thought she should have been paid as a Team Lead since March 2022. Plaintiff was later told that she would have to wait six months to get promoted into a permanent Team Lead position and would lose her temporary promotion in several weeks. Plaintiff complained again that she was being "used" to train the males who were promoted and that she would not have applied for the temporary position if she knew that would have prevented her from applying for a permanent position, when a permanent position was going to open up soon.

- 3.11 While Plaintiff was working intermittently as a team lead, a different white employee, Bambi Barr, engaged in a campaign of harassment against Plaintiff. First, she told Plaintiff, "I don't talk to people like you." When Plaintiff asked for clarification, Ms. Barr told Plaintiff that she only dated Black men and hates Black women because they would steal her man from her. Ms. Barr also stated that she hates Black women with power because they think they can tell her what to do. Plaintiff complained to Ms. Singh about Ms. Barr's racist and sex-based statements. Ms. Singh responded that Ms. Barr could not be racist and Plaintiff's assertions to the contrary were "silly", "because she dates black men."
- 3.12 Ms. Singh described Plaintiff as "our little Aunt Jemimah" after an incident with a Walmart customer who was belligerent and racist towards Plaintiff.
- 3.13 In January 2023, shortly after Plaintiff complained that she was not getting promoted to a full-time position, Manny Perez, a Walmart loss prevention employee, made an ominous comment to Plaintiff that he was "working on something" that would get him a "big promotion".
- 3.14 On February 15, 2023, Coach Eric told Plaintiff that some people wanted to meet with her in the office. He escorted her to the store manager's office where she saw COMPLAINT Page 4

I
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

Security Manager Michelle Keating with Mr. Perez. Ms. Keating showed Plaintiff some stills from a store surveillance video dated December 27, 2022. The stills showed Plaintiff putting items into a bag. Ms. Keating told Plaintiff that she knew Plaintiff stole the items because Plaintiff's Walmart app was not used to buy anything on that day. Plaintiff replied that she must have used another card and her bank statements would prove it because she never stole anything in her entire life.

- 3.15 Rather than verifying Plaintiff's assurances that she had paid with records, Walmart fired Plaintiff.
- 3.16 Walmart had Plaintiff "trespassed" from the store by Oak Harbor Police and had them escort her from the premises. This was done around 5:00 PM when the store was at its busiest.
- 3.17 Ms. Barr took photos of Plaintiff being escorted from the store by police and posted them on Facebook.
- 3.18 Plaintiff has suffered significant emotional distress as a result of her termination from Walmart.
- 3.19 Plaintiff's emotional distress worsened when she was indicted for allegedly shoplifting from Walmart. Although the charges were dismissed shortly after Plaintiff provided receipts to the prosecutor, the ordeal was particularly frightening, humiliating, and caused Plaintiff severe emotional distress.

III. <u>CAUSES OF ACTION</u>

A. VIOLATION OF WASHINGTON'S LAW AGAINST DISCRIMINATION, RCW 49.60.180 and 49.60.210

1	4.1	Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference paragraphs 3.4-3.15 and 3.18					
2	above.						
3	4.2	Defendant discriminated against Plaintiff in violation of RCW 49.60.180 on the					
4	basis of race, age, and/or sex.						
5	4.3	Defendant retaliated against Plaintiff in violation of RCW 49.60.210.					
6	В.	42 U.S.C. §1981(a)					
7	4.4	Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates by reference paragraphs 3.1 -3.19.					
8	4.5	Defendant discriminated against Plaintiff and retaliated against Plaintiff in					
9	violation of 42 U.S.C. §1981(a).						
10	С.	Title VII					
	4.6	Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates by reference paragraphs 3.1-3.19.					
11	4.7	Plaintiff obtained a right-to-sue letter on September 12, 2024 and timely filed					
12	this matter.						
13	4.8	Defendant discriminated against Plaintiff and retaliated against Plaintiff in					
14	violation of 42 U.S.C. §2000(e) et seq.						
15		IV. PRAYER FOR RELIEF					
16	WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, having asserted claims for relief, now prays for judgment as						
17	follows:						
18	1.	That the Court award Plaintiff general and special damages in an amount to be					
19	proven at trial and as allowed by law.						
20	2.	That the Court award Plaintiff prejudgment and post-judgment interest on the					
21	damages award.						
22	3.	That Plaintiff be awarded punitive damages pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §1981(a).					
23	4.	That the Court award legal costs and attorney's fees as allowed by law, including					
24	RCW 49.60.030 and 42 U.S.C. §1988(b), or other statute applicable to Plaintiff's claims.						
25							
	COMPLAINT	Dage 6					

1	5.	That the Court award Plaintiff any other such relief, including but not limited to
2	injunctive re	elief, as the Court finds equitable, just, or proper.
3	6.	Plaintiff demands a jury trial on all issues so triable.
4		
5	DAT	TED this 21st day of November, 2024.
6		BEAN LAW GROUP
7		s/ Matthew J. Bean
8		Matthew J. Bean, WSBA #23221 matt@beanlawgroup.com
9		Attorney for Plaintiff
10		
11		s/ Jason W. Preston Jason W. Preston, WSBA #61451
12		jason@beanlawgroup.com Attorney for Plaintiff
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

JS 44 (Rev. 03/24)

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS			DEFENDANTS	DEFENDANTS			
EUXUCINA GIRTON			WALMART, INC.				
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)			County of Residence of First Listed Defendant Benton County. Ark. (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY) NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.				
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name,	Address, and Telephone Number)		Attorneys (If Known)				
See attachmen	ţ						
II. BASIS OF JURISD	ICTION (Place an "X" in One Box O	Only) III.			(Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff		
1 U.S. Government Plaintiff	Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)	y) (Control of the Contro	TF DEF 1 Incorporated or Pr of Business In T			
2 U.S. Government Defendant	4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Partie	es in Item III)		2 Incorporated and I of Business In A			
D. NATURE OF SU		(Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country	3 Foreign Nation	□ 6 □ 6		
IV. NATURE OF SUI	(Place an "X" in One Box Only) TORTS		FORFEITURE/PENALTY	Click here for: Nature of S BANKRUPTCY	Suit Code Descriptions. OTHER STATUTES		
110 Insurance 120 Marine 130 Miller Act 140 Negotiable Instrument 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgmen 151 Medicare Act 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excludes Veterans) 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits 160 Stockholders' Suits 190 Other Contract 195 Contract Product Liability 196 Franchise REAL PROPERTY 210 Land Condemnation 220 Foreclosure 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment 240 Torts to Land 245 Tort Product Liability 290 All Other Real Property	PERSONAL INJURY	eath Penalty	625 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 690 Other LABOR 710 Fair Labor Standards Act 720 Labor/Management Relations 740 Railway Labor Act 751 Family and Medical Leave Act 790 Other Labor Litigation 791 Employee Retirement Income Security Act IMMIGRATION 462 Naturalization Application 465 Other Immigration Actions	422 Appeal 28 USC 158 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS 820 Copyrights 830 Patent 835 Patent - Abbreviated New Drug Application 840 Trademark 880 Defend Trade Secrets Act of 2016 SOCIAL SECURITY 861 HIA (1395ff) 862 Black Lung (923) 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) 864 SSID Title XVI 865 RSI (405(g)) FEDERAL TAX SUITS 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609	375 False Claims Act 376 Qui Tam (31 USC 3729(a)) 400 State Reapportionment 410 Antitrust 430 Banks and Banking 450 Commerce 460 Deportation 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations 480 Consumer Credit (15 USC 1681 or 1692) 485 Telephone Consumer Protection Act 490 Cable/Sat TV 850 Securities/Commodities/ Exchange 890 Other Statutory Actions 891 Agricultural Acts 893 Environmental Matters 895 Freedom of Information Act 896 Arbitration 899 Administrative Procedure Act/Review or Appeal of Agency Decision 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes		
	moved from 3 Remanded Appellate	Court R	(specify	r District Litigation Transfer			
VI. CAUSE OF ACTIO	ON Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under 42 U.S.C. 1981(a) and 42 U.S.C. Brief description of cause: Discrimination in employment ba	. 2000 et. seq.		tutes unless diversity):			
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT: CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P.		ASS ACTION	DEMAND \$	CHECK YES only JURY DEMAND:	if demanded in complaint:		
VIII. RELATED CASS	E(S) (See instructions): JUDGE	8		DOCKET NUMBER			
DATE	SIGNA	ATURE OF ATTORNI	EY OF RECORD				
November 21, 2024		XV					
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY							
RECEIPT # Al	MOUNT	PPLYING IFP	JUDGE	MAG IUIT)GE		

1	ATTACHMENT TO CIVIL COVER SHEET
2	
3	BOX 1(c) PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY LIST
4	BEAN LAW GROUP
5	Matthew J. Bean, WSBA #23221 matt@beanlawgroup.com
6	2200 6th Ave, Suite 500 Seattle, WA 98121
7	Ph: 206.522.0618
8	Fax: 206.524.3751
9	Jason W. Preston, WSBA #61451 jason@beanlawgroup.com
10	2200 6th Ave, Suite 500 Seattle, WA 98121
11	Ph: 206.522.0618
12	or 206.602.6358 Fax: 206.524.3751
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	

ATTACHMENT TO CIVIL COVER SHEET

25

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the					
District of					
Plaintiff(s) V. Defendant(s))))) ()) () () () () () () () () ()				
SUMMO	ONS IN A CIVIL ACTION				
To: (Defendant's name and address)					
A lawsuit has been filed against you. Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are:					
If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court. **CLERK OF COURT**					
Date:					

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

Civil Action No.

PROOF OF SERVICE

(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (l))

	This summons for (no	ame of individual and title, if an	ıy)				
was rec	ceived by me on (date)		·				
	☐ I personally served the summons on the individual at (place)						
			on (date)	; or			
	☐ I left the summons	☐ I left the summons at the individual's residence or usual place of abode with (name)					
		, a person of suitable age and discretion who resides there,					
	on (date)	copy to the individual's last known address; or					
		, who is					
	designated by law to	accept service of process	s on behalf of (name of organization)				
			on (date)	; or			
	☐ I returned the sum	mons unexecuted because	e	; or			
	☐ Other (specify):						
	My fees are \$	for travel and \$	for services, for a total of \$				
	I declare under penalty of perjury that this information is true.						
Date:							
			Server's signature				
		_	Printed name and title				
		_	Server's address				

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc: