

# [***Labor board: Home Depot violated labor law by firing an employee who drew 'BLM' on work apron***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BCS-BV11-DYMD-627B-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

NEW YORK — The nation's labor board ruled on Wednesday that Home Depot violated federal labor law when it fired an employee for refusing to remove the hand-drawn “BLM” acronym for “Black Lives Matter” from a work apron.

The National Labor Relations Act said it protects the legal right of employees to engage in “concerted activities” for the purpose of “mutual aid or protection” regardless of whether they are represented by a union.

The board reasoned that the decision by the worker — identified as Antonio Morales — to display the BLM acronym on the apron was a direct response to racial discrimination complaints within the store and is protected under federal law. It was also an attempt by Morales to bring the complaints to the attention of Home Depot managers.

“It is well-established that workers have the right to join together to improve their working conditions — including by protesting racial discrimination in the workplace,” said Chairman Lauren McFerran in a statement. “It is equally clear that an employee who acts individually to support a group protest regarding a workplace issue remains protected under the law.”

In an email statement to The Associated Press on Wednesday, Home Depot, based in Atlanta, said it disagreed with NLRB's decision.

“The Home Depot is fully committed to diversity and respect for all people,” the company said. “We do not tolerate any kind of workplace harassment or discrimination.”

The right to wear clothing with BLM insignia or other social justice apparel in the workplace became a big issue in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police in May 2020.

That same year, [*American Airlines*](https://apnews.com/general-news-961bf16bc6a21cbf5e0f04ca9a1b085a) announced that it would let employees wear Black Lives Matter pins on their uniforms, calling it a matter of equality and not ***politics***. The company joined Starbucks, Delta Air Lines and other major companies that let employees wear items supporting the movement that protests police violence against Black people.

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