

Agency finds chain violated overtime rule

SEATTLE (AP) — Nordstrom Inc. has been ordered to pay two years worth of unpaid overtime compensation to its hourly wage employees in Washington state, the state labor department announced.

Ruling on a complaint filed by Locals 1001 and 367, United Food and Commercial Workers Union, the state Department of Labor and Industries found that Nordstrom violated the state Minimum Wage Act in not paying employees for all the time they worked.

The decision affects all employees of the Seattle-based retail chain, including those who work in Nordstrom Place Two stores, said Kellie Tormey, a spokeswoman for Nordstrom.

Tormey said the company felt it was doing nothing wrong and that employees were paid for their extra acts through their commissions.

But a union leader said the ruling could also affect employees of the apparel retailer in Oregon, California, Utah, Virginia and Alaska.

Nordstrom could be liable for \$40 million in claims and penalties in Washington state alone, Local 1001 president Joe Peterson said.

Peterson said today a class-action suit on behalf of 30,000 Nordstrom employees nationwide would be filed against Nordstrom if it doesn't comply with the state Labor Department's decision.

The union contends Nordstrom required or encouraged workers to attend work-related meetings, locate merchandise, prepare inventory and write customer correspondence after their regular hours or on days off and did not compensate them for the work.

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State: Nordstrom must pay