

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS COMMISSION
BEFORE THE DIRECTOR OF UNFAIR PRACTICES

In the Matter of

TOWNSHIP OF MAPLE SHADE,

Respondent,

-and-

DOCKET NO. CO-81-352

TEAMSTERS LOCAL UNION 676,

Charging Party.

SYNOPSIS

The Director of Unfair Practices declines to issue a complaint with respect to an Unfair Practice Charge since the Charging Party did not assert that any of the claimed unfair practices occurred within six months of the filing of the Unfair Practice Charge.

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REFUSAL TO ISSUE COMPLAINT

An Unfair Practice Charge was filed with the Public Employment Relations Commission (the "Commission") on May 18, 1981, as amended May 28, 1981, by Teamsters Local Union 676 ("Local 676") against the Township of Maple Shade (the "Township") alleging that the Township was engaging in unfair practices within the meaning of the New Jersey Employer-Employee Relations Act, N.J.S.A. 34:13A-1 et seq. (the "Act"), specifically, N.J.S.A. 34:13A-5.4(a)(1), (3) and (4) ^{1/} and N.J.S.A. 34:13A-5.4(b)(1). ^{2/}

^{1/} These subsections prohibit public employers, their representatives or agents from: "(1) Interfering with restraining or coercing employees in the exercise of the rights guaranteed to them by this Act. (3) Discriminating in regard to hire or tenure of employment of any term or condition of employment to encourage or discourage employees in the exercise of the rights guaranteed to them by this Act. (4) Discharging or otherwise discriminating against any employee because he has signed or filed an affidavit, petition or complaint or given any information or testimony under this Act."

^{2/} These subsections prohibit employee organizations, their representatives or agents from: "(1) Interfering with, restraining or coercing employees in the exercise of the rights guaranteed to them by this Act."

N.J.S.A. 34:13A-5.4(c) sets forth in pertinent part that the Commission shall have the power to prevent anyone from engaging in any unfair practice, and that it has the authority to issue a complaint stating the unfair practice charge. ^{3/} The Commission has delegated its authority to issue complaints to the undersigned and has established a standard upon which an unfair practice complaint may be issued. This standard provides that a complaint shall issue if it appears that the allegations of the charging party, if true, may constitute an unfair practice within the meaning of the Act. ^{4/} The Commission's rules provide that the undersigned may decline to issue a complaint. ^{5/}

For the reasons stated below the undersigned has determined that the Commission's complaint issuance standards have not been met.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 34:13A-5.4(c), the Commission is precluded from issuing a complaint where the unfair practice charge has not been filed within six months of the

^{3/} N.J.S.A. 34:13A-5.4(c) provides: "The Commission shall have exclusive power as hereinafter provided to prevent anyone from engaging in any unfair practice ... Whenever it is charged that anyone has engaged or is engaging in any such unfair practice, the commission, or any designated agent thereof, shall have authority to issue and cause to be served upon such party a complaint stating the specific unfair practice and including a notice of hearing containing the date and place of hearing before the commission or any designated agent thereof ... "

^{4/} N.J.A.C. 19:14-2.1

^{5/} N.J.A.C. 19:14-2.3

occurrence of the alleged unfair practice. More specifically, N.J.S.A. 34:13A-5.4(c) provides: " ... provided that no complaint shall issue based upon any unfair practice occurring more than six months prior to the filing of the charge unless the person aggrieved thereby was prevented from filing such charge in which event the six months period shall be computed from the day he was no longer so prevented."

Further, the Commission's rules state that an unfair practice charge shall contain inter alia:

A clear and concise statement of the facts constituting the alleged unfair practice, including, where known, the time and place of occurrence of the particular acts alleged and the names of respondent's agents or other representatives by whom committed and a statement of the portion or portions of the Act alleged to have been violated. (Emphasis added) 6/

Accordingly, the undersigned has determined that it is incumbent upon the Charging Party to allege the occurrence of unfair practices, within the six month limitation requirement, and that in the absence of such allegations, the undersigned would decline to issue a complaint. See In re N. Warren Reg. Bd. of Ed., D.U.P. No. 78-7, 4 NJPER 55 (¶ 4026 1977).

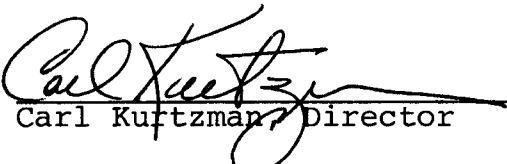
Subsequent to the filing of the instant Unfair Practice Charge, by letter dated May 20, 1981, the undersigned informed the Charging Party that the Charge could not be processed further unless it was amended, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 19:14-1.5, to include the dates of the acts alleged to constitute the unfair practice.

6/ N.J.A.C. 19:14-1.3

The undersigned directed the Charging Party's attention to the relevant six month limitation provision contained in N.J.S.A. 34:13A-5.4(c) and advised that a complaint would not issue if the Charging Party failed to allege the occurrence of an unfair practice within the prescribed six month limitation period. Although the Charge was amended, the amendment did not state the date of the alleged unfair practice. On June 4, 1981, the undersigned informed the Charging Party that, "(1) the amendment was not signed, (2) the unfair practice charge still does not contain dates of the alleged activities and, (3) both section (a)(1) and (b)(1) of the Act are alleged to be in violation ((b) section of N.J.S.A. 34:13A-5.4 lists prohibited activities by employee organizations.)", and again requested the Charging Party to submit a second amendment. The Charging Party was advised that, in the absence of an amendment, the Charge could not be processed further. The undersigned has not received a reply to the June 4, 1981 letter, nor has the Charge been amended a second time as requested.

Accordingly, as the Charge does not contain the specific time of occurrence of the conduct alleged to constitute the unfair practice within the six month statutory limitation period, the undersigned declines to issue a complaint.

BY ORDER OF THE DIRECTOR
OF UNFAIR PRACTICES


Carl Kutzman, Director

DATED: September 1, 1981
Trenton, New Jersey