

D.R. NO. 94-15

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS COMMISSION  
BEFORE THE DIRECTOR OF REPRESENTATION

In the Matter of

CAMDEN COUNTY HEALTH SERVICE CENTER,  
Public Employer,

-and-

AFSCME COUNCIL 71; LOCAL 2307,  
Petitioner,

Docket No. CU-94-7

-and-

CAMDEN COUNCIL NO. 10,  
Intervenor.

SYNOPSIS

The Director of Representation clarifies a white collar unit to include the Psychiatric Technician. The Director rejected the petitioner's assertion that the title shared a greater community of interest with its blue collar unit. He found that both the nature of the duties and advanced training required of a Psychiatric Technician warranted its inclusion in the white collar technical unit.

D.R. NO. 94-15

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS COMMISSION  
BEFORE THE DIRECTOR OF REPRESENTATION

In the Matter of

CAMDEN COUNTY HEALTH SERVICE CENTER,

Public Employer,

-and-

AFSCME COUNCIL 71, LOCAL 2307,

Docket No. CU-94-7

Petitioner,

-and-

CAMDEN COUNCIL NO. 10,

Intervenor.

Appearances:

For the Public Employer,  
Brown & Connery, attorneys  
(Jane A. Lorber, of counsel)

For the Petitioner,  
Emanuel Murray, Staff Rep.

For the Intervenor,  
Tomar, Simonoff, Adourian & O'Brien, attorneys  
(Mary L. Crangle, of counsel)

DECISION

AFSCME Council 71, Local 2307 filed a Clarification of Unit  
Petition with the Public Employment Relations Commission through  
which it seeks to clarify its existing non-supervisory blue-collar

employee unit of the Camden County Health Service Center to include employees in the newly-created title of Psychiatric Technician.<sup>1/</sup>

Camden Council No. 10, which represents a broad-based white-collar unit at the Health Service Center, intervened in this matter, seeking to clarify its unit to include the Psychiatric Technician title.

The Health Service Center filed a position statement in which it asserts the Psychiatric Technicians community of interest lies with Council 10's unit.

All parties were given an opportunity to submit position statements and supporting affidavits. Based upon our investigation the following facts appear.

Employees in the Psychiatric Technician title are required to have a post-high school certification showing satisfactory completion of a formalized training program in the care of persons with mental disorders. The specific duties of the incumbent in the title include: tracking patient activities and reporting this information to the administrator, monitoring patient programming, serving on hospital committees, being involved in team treatment, including leading therapeutic groups and working with the psychologist and staff.

These duties appear to be more closely allied with those of the white collar employees in Council 10's unit. The white-collar

---

<sup>1/</sup> The original petition was filed August 23, 1993. However, the petition was not perfected until October 6, 1993.

unit is comprised of clerical employees, employees in the Medical Records Department, social workers, employees in the Recreation Department, pharmacy employees and Mental Health Workers. By contrast, the titles in AFSCME's blue collar unit include: laundry workers, maintenance worker, cooks, equipment operator, groundskeepers and laborers. This unit also includes attendants, physical therapy aides and occupational aides. While these latter titles seem to be similar to the psychiatric technicians titles, there is nothing in the record to indicate these titles require any specific training or have the same level of responsibility as the Psychiatric Technician. Professional Association of N.J. Dept. of Ed., 64 N.J. 231 (1974).

On December 22, 1994, we wrote to the parties informing them that we intended to clarify the unit represented by Council 10 to include the Psychiatric Technician. AFSCME responded to our letter. AFSCME argues that the Psychiatric Technician shares greater similarities in job definition and duties with two of its titles, Institutional Attendant and Therapeutic Technician, than with titles in Council 10's white collar unit. We disagree. The fact that some duties are similar to AFSCME unit titles does not overcome the stronger community of interest in skill levels and nature of the contact with patients between the Psychiatric Technician and the titles in Council 10's unit. AFSCME titles do not require the equivalent of two years training and certification as does the Psychiatric Technician. Further, most of AFSCME's unit

titles do not participate in direct psychiatric care either as a member of a therapeutic team or individually, as in therapy group attendance and leadership.

Based upon the foregoing, the Psychiatric Technician position is most appropriately included in the white-collar employee unit represented by Council 10. Accordingly, Council 10's unit is clarified to include the Psychiatric Technician position.

BY ORDER OF THE DIRECTOR  
OF REPRESENTATION

  
Edmund G. Gerber, Director

DATED: January 25, 1994  
Trenton, New Jersey