



Department of Employee Relations

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To the Honorable
Finance and Personnel Committee
Common Council
City of Milwaukee

Dear Committee Members;

In 2012, due to the passage of WI Act 10, the City adopted a number of changes to Ch. 340 of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances. One of those changes was a meet and confer process which required that departments meet with their employees and/or employee representatives to discuss changes in work rules and other changes dealing with the terms and conditions of employment. The City also instituted a disciplinary grievance procedure to deal with written warnings and suspensions that are not appealable to the City Service Commission. It has now been 8 years since those changes have taken effect and we have had the opportunity to learn what is working with those processes and what revisions might be made to help the City continue to strive for employee and management cooperation.

CC File # 191281 recommends revising multiple sections of Chapter 340 of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances in order to help clarify the role that the Department of Employee Relations has in resolving work place disputes, creating city wide employment policies, ensuring that human resources best practices are being followed, and ensuring compliance with applicable employment regulations. The revisions will also include a requirement that departments inform employees of the dispute resolution/grievance procedures available to them under applicable laws, civil service commission rules, and other relevant policies. City departments should also cooperate with employee representatives in addressing and resolving employment issues and concerns, and an annual meet and confer meeting should be held in order to touch base with employees and/or employee representatives regarding any workplace issues.

Language will also be added which will allow the Department of Employee relations to establish a dispute resolution procedure that employees will be able to use to address issues that arise within a department that are not disciplinary in nature but are rather workplace disputes. These are issues that would have been grievable as contract violations prior to Act 10 when general city employees had full bargaining rights under Wis. Stats. 111.70. The Department of Employee relations will develop the administrative guidelines for the dispute resolution procedure which will allow the department to investigate the dispute and make recommendations on the appropriate course of action that should be implemented by the appropriate City department.

DER looks forward to discussion on the recommended changes to the Code at the upcoming meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee.

Sincerely,

Nicole M. Fleck
Labor Negotiator

