



**THE TRIAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS  
OFFICE OF COURT MANAGEMENT**

**Human Resources Department**  
Two Center Plaza, Suite 540  
Boston, MA 02108

**Jeffrey A. Locke**  
Chief Justice of the Trial Court

**John A. Bello**  
Court Administrator

**Paul D. Dietl**  
Chief Human Resources Officer

June 30, 2022

Mr. George E. Noel  
Business Manager, Chief Negotiator  
OPEIU, AFL-CIO, Local 6  
150 Wood Road  
Suite 400  
Braintree, MA 02108

VIA EMAIL

**RE: Cease and Desist Letter/Grievance**

Dear Mr. Noel,

Chief Justice Locke has referred Local 6's June 27, 2022, Cease and Desist Letter as well your June 27, 2022 grievance about the same to my office for handling and response. The June 27, 2022 Cease and Desist Letter states that you are the appropriate contact for ongoing communications.

As an initial matter, please note that while Chief Justice Jeffrey Locke is the judicial head of the Trial Court, John Bello as the Court Administrator (CA) is the administrative head. CA Bello has designated my office and by extension Assistant Chief Human Resources Officer Jim McDonagh as the Trial Court's representative for all matters related to labor relations. All future communications regarding labor relations matters should be directed to Mr. McDonagh's attention alone.

Your June 27, 2022 grievance has been delivered to Human Resources Manager Christine Hegarty for proper handling in keeping with our collective bargaining agreement.

Unfortunately, we are unable to comply with your demand that we cease and desist from implementing our plan to begin recruiting Case Specialists, Probation Case Specialists and Child Support Processing Clerks at Step 3 of the salary schedule. As has already been shared with you, hiring for these positions is at crisis point. On August 1, 2020, we had 598 staff active in these roles. As of May 7, 2022, we are down to 514 staff. We currently have approximately 67 vacant positions that we are struggling to fill. These unfilled vacancies are creating an untenable stress on the staff we have retained as they work diligently to get the work of the Trial Court accomplished.

We are well aware of our obligations to bargain in good faith regarding this topic. As you know

we reached out in early May to begin this conversation, forwarding an overview of our plan and noting that it was urgent. Despite this, on the eve of scheduling the matter for more formal bargaining, Local 6 refused to continue conversations until hazard pay was dispersed to your members, a wholly unrelated topic. As a result, conversations were delayed until early June when we again shared the urgency of this matter and our belief that we would need to implement. It is my understanding that at our June 8, 2022 meeting the topic of retention bonuses and/or longevity bonuses were discussed and rejected at the table. We shared a draft MOA with you on June 10, 2022. Despite already being rejected, the counteroffer received from Local 6 on June 17, 2022, included only the already rejected proposals for longevity and retention bonuses. Similarly, your cease-and-desist letter offers no new proposals designed to resolve our impasse. This fact nearly two months following our initial discussion of this topic has brought us to this impasse. Please find attached to this letter a communication that we are sending to employees today.

Although we are forced to implement at this time, we are willing to continue a dialogue on what, if any, impact this may have on your members besides the obvious impact of lessening their workload. Although Mr. McDonagh is unavailable today, he will return tomorrow and be available to continue that dialogue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Dietl". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

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Paul Dietl  
Chief Human Resources Officer

w/ attachment

cc: James McDonagh, ACHRO, Labor Relations