

CHICAGO TEAMSTERS JOINT COUNCIL 25



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COURT CLERK ATTEMPTS TO DERAIL TEAMSTER CONTRACT **Local 714 Files Unfair Labor Practice Charges Against Clerk Amid Anti-Union Campaign**

Teamsters Local 714 has filed unfair labor practice charges against the Clerk of the Lake County Circuit Court following management's anti-union campaign to disrupt contract negotiations.

More than 120 clerks of the circuit court in northern Illinois have been seeking a Teamster contract for more than a year, but employee discrimination has stalled bargaining over the last six months. Sally Coffelt, Clerk of the Lake County Circuit Court, has engaged workers in anti-union activity on the job and refused to agree to her own contract language, according to recent unfair labor practice charges filed with the Illinois Labor Relations Board by the Teamsters.

"Local 714 has been certified for more than a year to represent a significant number of workers who are asking for the security of a Teamster contract," said Barb Cornett of Local 714. "But the union has been in mediation for more than six months as Clerk Coffelt continues a campaign against the court's own employees. Her actions amount to nothing more than unlawful retaliation."

The Teamsters' filing of unfair labor practice charges includes:

- the permission of employees to engage in anti-union activity during works hours, while being prohibited from engaging in pro-union support;
- Coffelt's interference with the union by threatening with discipline workers who support the Teamsters; and
- Coffelt's refusal to bargain in good faith with the union, as exemplified by her conduct during negotiations.

The charges also include references to public statements made by the employer in which, on one occasion, Coffelt claimed the union would be ousted by the end of the certification year.

As Local 714 continues to negotiate, several issues remain to finalize the first contract. The Teamsters are seeking a clear definition for temporary employees to prevent the replacement of current workers with nonunion help. Coffelt has refused to negotiate such an agreement, choosing to reject contract language she originally proposed to define temporary employees.

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The union is also requesting retroactive wages for retired clerks and a contract clause of fair share representation, which would allow the Teamsters to conduct research and investigate grievances. The union will continue to strive for Coffelt to return to the bargaining table in good faith and cease to discriminate against employees who support unionization.

“It is clear the Clerk of the Lake County Circuit Court has taken a personal offense to the right of workers to organize and unionize,” said Cornett. “It is a shame that one’s inability to overcome personal differences has jeopardized the wages, benefits and working conditions of more than 120 county employees.”

Teamsters Local 714 represents approximately 8,000 hardworking men and women throughout Illinois, including more than 4,000 public employees.