



News

Hinshaw's Raylene DeWitte Grischow Secures Illinois Labor Relations Board Win on Behalf of Sangamon County Sheriff's Office

October 24, 2018

Hinshaw partner Raylene DeWitte Grischow won an appeal to the Illinois Labor Relations Board on behalf of the Sangamon County Sheriff's Office and the County of Sangamon in a case involving claims of unfair labor practices.

The Sheriff's Office had been sued by a former member of its Tactical Response Unit ("TRU"). The TRU is responsible for service and protection in high-risk situations. It is a disciplined team, specifically trained to respond to aggressive situations utilizing dedicated training, tactics and equipment.

While still a member of the squad, the plaintiff had filed two grievances challenging the promotion of other TRU members, and arguing that he was instead entitled to the promotions. After he was later removed from the squad, he filed an unfair labor practice claim.

An Administrative Law Judge initially ruled the plaintiff had established a case for retaliation. However, the Labor Relations Board rejected this and other conclusions of the ALJ and determined that the real reason the plaintiff was removed from the squad was because the other TRU members had lost their trust in him. Squad members were not upset because the plaintiff had filed his grievances; rather they were upset that the subject and nature of those grievances demonstrated the plaintiff would only look out for himself at the expense of his fellow team members. He was removed from the squad in order to maintain a working environment conducive to successfully executing the TRU's functions. Accordingly, the complaint was dismissed in its entirety.

The case is *Travis Koester v. County of Sangamon and the Sangamon County Sheriff's Office*, case no: S-CS-16-133.

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