



Ohio Revised Code

Section 4117.14 Settlement of dispute between exclusive representative and public employer - procedures.

Effective: October 3, 2023

Legislation: House Bill 33

(A) The procedures contained in this section govern the settlement of disputes between an exclusive representative and a public employer concerning the termination or modification of an existing collective bargaining agreement or negotiation of a successor agreement, or the negotiation of an initial collective bargaining agreement.

(B)(1) In those cases where there exists a collective bargaining agreement, any public employer or exclusive representative desiring to terminate, modify, or negotiate a successor collective bargaining agreement shall:

(a) Serve written notice upon the other party of the proposed termination, modification, or successor agreement. The party must serve the notice not less than sixty days prior to the expiration date of the existing agreement or, in the event the existing collective bargaining agreement does not contain an expiration date, not less than sixty days prior to the time it is proposed to make the termination or modifications or to make effective a successor agreement.

(b) Offer to bargain collectively with the other party for the purpose of modifying or terminating any existing agreement or negotiating a successor agreement;

(c) Notify the state employment relations board of the offer by serving upon the board a copy of the written notice to the other party and a copy of the existing collective bargaining agreement.

(2) In the case of initial negotiations between a public employer and an exclusive representative, where a collective bargaining agreement has not been in effect between the parties, any party may serve notice upon the board and the other party setting forth the names and addresses of the parties and offering to meet, for a period of ninety days, with the other party for the purpose of negotiating a collective bargaining agreement.



If the settlement procedures specified in divisions (B), (C), and (D) of this section govern the parties, where those procedures refer to the expiration of a collective bargaining agreement, it means the expiration of the sixty-day period to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement referred to in this subdivision, or in the case of initial negotiations, it means the ninety-day period referred to in this subdivision.

(3) The parties shall continue in full force and effect all the terms and conditions of any existing collective bargaining agreement, without resort to strike or lock-out, for a period of sixty days after the party gives notice or until the expiration date of the collective bargaining agreement, whichever occurs later, or for a period of ninety days where applicable.

(4) Upon receipt of the notice, the parties shall enter into collective bargaining.

(C) In the event the parties are unable to reach an agreement, they may submit, at any time prior to forty-five days before the expiration date of the collective bargaining agreement, the issues in dispute to any mutually agreed upon dispute settlement procedure which supersedes the procedures contained in this section.

(1) The procedures may include:

(a) Conventional arbitration of all unsettled issues;

(b) Arbitration confined to a choice between the last offer of each party to the agreement as a single package;

(c) Arbitration confined to a choice of the last offer of each party to the agreement on each issue submitted;

(d) The procedures described in division (C)(1)(a), (b), or (c) of this section and including among the choices for the arbitrator, the recommendations of the fact finder, if there are recommendations, either as a single package or on each issue submitted;

(e) Settlement by a citizens' conciliation council composed of three residents within the jurisdiction



of the public employer. The public employer shall select one member and the exclusive representative shall select one member. The two members selected shall select the third member who shall chair the council. If the two members cannot agree upon a third member within five days after their appointments, the board shall appoint the third member. Once appointed, the council shall make a final settlement of the issues submitted to it pursuant to division (G) of this section.

(f) Any other dispute settlement procedure mutually agreed to by the parties.

(2) If, fifty days before the expiration date of the collective bargaining agreement, the parties are unable to reach an agreement, any party may request the state employment relations board to intervene. The request shall set forth the names and addresses of the parties, the issues involved, and, if applicable, the expiration date of any agreement.

The board shall intervene and investigate the dispute to determine whether the parties have engaged in collective bargaining.

If an impasse exists or forty-five days before the expiration date of the collective bargaining agreement if one exists, the board shall appoint a mediator to assist the parties in the collective bargaining process.

(3) Any time after the appointment of a mediator, either party may request the appointment of a fact-finding panel. Within fifteen days after receipt of a request for a fact-finding panel, the board shall appoint a fact-finding panel of not more than three members who have been selected by the parties in accordance with rules established by the board, from a list of qualified persons maintained by the board.

(a) The fact-finding panel shall, in accordance with rules and procedures established by the board that include the regulation of costs and expenses of fact-finding, gather facts and make recommendations for the resolution of the matter. The board shall by its rules require each party to specify in writing the unresolved issues and its position on each issue to the fact-finding panel. The fact-finding panel shall make final recommendations as to all the unresolved issues.

(b) The board may continue mediation, order the parties to engage in collective bargaining until the



expiration date of the agreement, or both.

(4) The following guidelines apply to fact-finding:

(a) The fact-finding panel may establish times and place of hearings which shall be, where feasible, in the jurisdiction of the state.

(b) The fact-finding panel shall conduct the hearing pursuant to rules established by the board.

(c) Upon request of the fact-finding panel, the board shall issue subpoenas for hearings conducted by the panel.

(d) The fact-finding panel may administer oaths.

(e) The board shall prescribe guidelines for the fact-finding panel to follow in making findings. In making its recommendations, the fact-finding panel shall take into consideration the factors listed in divisions (G)(7)(a) to (f) of this section.

(f) The fact-finding panel may attempt mediation at any time during the fact-finding process. From the time of appointment until the fact-finding panel makes a final recommendation, it shall not discuss the recommendations for settlement of the dispute with parties other than the direct parties to the dispute.

(5) The fact-finding panel, acting by a majority of its members, shall transmit its findings of fact and recommendations on the unresolved issues to the public employer and employee organization involved and to the board no later than fourteen days after the appointment of the fact-finding panel, unless the parties mutually agree to an extension. The parties shall share the cost of the fact-finding panel in a manner agreed to by the parties.

(6)(a) Not later than seven days after the findings and recommendations are sent, the legislative body, by a three-fifths vote of its total membership, and in the case of the public employee organization, the membership, by a three-fifths vote of the total membership, may reject the recommendations; if neither rejects the recommendations, the recommendations shall be deemed



agreed upon as the final resolution of the issues submitted and a collective bargaining agreement shall be executed between the parties, including the fact-finding panel's recommendations, except as otherwise modified by the parties by mutual agreement. If either the legislative body or the public employee organization rejects the recommendations, the board shall publicize the findings of fact and recommendations of the fact-finding panel. The board shall adopt rules governing the procedures and methods for public employees to vote on the recommendations of the fact-finding panel.

(b) As used in division (C)(6)(a) of this section, "legislative body" means the controlling board when the state or any of its agencies, authorities, commissions, boards, or other branch of public employment is party to the fact-finding process.

(D) If the parties are unable to reach agreement within seven days after the publication of findings and recommendations from the fact-finding panel or the collective bargaining agreement, if one exists, has expired, then the:

(1) Public employees, who are members of a police or fire department, members of the state highway patrol, deputy sheriffs, dispatchers employed by a police, fire, or sheriff's department or the state highway patrol or civilian dispatchers employed by a public employer other than a police, fire, or sheriff's department to dispatch police, fire, sheriff's department, or emergency medical or rescue personnel and units, an exclusive nurse's unit, employees of Ohio deaf and blind education services, employees of any public employee retirement system, corrections officers, guards at penal or mental institutions, special police officers appointed in accordance with sections 5119.08 and 5123.13 of the Revised Code, psychiatric attendants employed at mental health forensic facilities, youth leaders employed at juvenile correctional facilities, or members of a law enforcement security force that is established and maintained exclusively by a board of county commissioners and whose members are employed by that board, shall submit the matter to a final offer settlement procedure pursuant to a board order issued forthwith to the parties to settle by a conciliator selected by the parties. The parties shall request from the board a list of five qualified conciliators and the parties shall select a single conciliator from the list by alternate striking of names. If the parties cannot agree upon a conciliator within five days after the board order, the board shall on the sixth day after its order appoint a conciliator from a list of qualified persons maintained by the board or shall request a list of qualified conciliators from the American arbitration association and appoint therefrom.



(2) Public employees other than those listed in division (D)(1) of this section have the right to strike under Chapter 4117. of the Revised Code provided that the employee organization representing the employees has given a ten-day prior written notice of an intent to strike to the public employer and to the board, and further provided that the strike is for full, consecutive work days and the beginning date of the strike is at least ten work days after the ending date of the most recent prior strike involving the same bargaining unit; however, the board, at its discretion, may attempt mediation at any time.

(E) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the parties, at any time, from voluntarily agreeing to submit any or all of the issues in dispute to any other alternative dispute settlement procedure. An agreement or statutory requirement to arbitrate or to settle a dispute pursuant to a final offer settlement procedure and the award issued in accordance with the agreement or statutory requirement is enforceable in the same manner as specified in division (B) of section 4117.09 of the Revised Code.

(F) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a party from seeking enforcement of a collective bargaining agreement or a conciliator's award as specified in division (B) of section 4117.09 of the Revised Code.

(G) The following guidelines apply to final offer settlement proceedings under division (D)(1) of this section:

(1) The parties shall submit to final offer settlement those issues that are subject to collective bargaining as provided by section 4117.08 of the Revised Code and upon which the parties have not reached agreement and other matters mutually agreed to by the public employer and the exclusive representative; except that the conciliator may attempt mediation at any time.

(2) The conciliator shall hold a hearing within thirty days of the board's order to submit to a final offer settlement procedure, or as soon thereafter as is practicable.

(3) The conciliator shall conduct the hearing pursuant to rules developed by the board. The conciliator shall establish the hearing time and place, but it shall be, where feasible, within the jurisdiction of the state. Not later than five calendar days before the hearing, each of the parties shall



submit to the conciliator, to the opposing party, and to the board, a written report summarizing the unresolved issues, the party's final offer as to the issues, and the rationale for that position.

(4) Upon the request by the conciliator, the board shall issue subpoenas for the hearing.

(5) The conciliator may administer oaths.

(6) The conciliator shall hear testimony from the parties and provide for a written record to be made of all statements at the hearing. The board shall submit for inclusion in the record and for consideration by the conciliator the written report and recommendation of the fact-finders.

(7) After hearing, the conciliator shall resolve the dispute between the parties by selecting, on an issue-by-issue basis, from between each of the party's final settlement offers, taking into consideration the following:

(a) Past collectively bargained agreements, if any, between the parties;

(b) Comparison of the issues submitted to final offer settlement relative to the employees in the bargaining unit involved with those issues related to other public and private employees doing comparable work, giving consideration to factors peculiar to the area and classification involved;

(c) The interests and welfare of the public, the ability of the public employer to finance and administer the issues proposed, and the effect of the adjustments on the normal standard of public service;

(d) The lawful authority of the public employer;

(e) The stipulations of the parties;

(f) Such other factors, not confined to those listed in this section, which are normally or traditionally taken into consideration in the determination of the issues submitted to final offer settlement through voluntary collective bargaining, mediation, fact-finding, or other impasse resolution procedures in the public service or in private employment.



(8) Final offer settlement awards made under Chapter 4117. of the Revised Code are subject to Chapter 2711. of the Revised Code.

(9) If more than one conciliator is used, the determination must be by majority vote.

(10) The conciliator shall make written findings of fact and promulgate a written opinion and order upon the issues presented to the conciliator, and upon the record made before the conciliator and shall mail or otherwise deliver a true copy thereof to the parties and the board.

(11) Increases in rates of compensation and other matters with cost implications awarded by the conciliator may be effective only at the start of the fiscal year next commencing after the date of the final offer settlement award; provided that if a new fiscal year has commenced since the issuance of the board order to submit to a final offer settlement procedure, the awarded increases may be retroactive to the commencement of the new fiscal year. The parties may, at any time, amend or modify a conciliator's award or order by mutual agreement.

(12) The parties shall bear equally the cost of the final offer settlement procedure.

(13) Conciliators appointed pursuant to this section shall be residents of the state.

(H) All final offer settlement awards and orders of the conciliator made pursuant to Chapter 4117. of the Revised Code are subject to review by the court of common pleas having jurisdiction over the public employer as provided in Chapter 2711. of the Revised Code. If the public employer is located in more than one court of common pleas district, the court of common pleas in which the principal office of the chief executive is located has jurisdiction.

(I) The issuance of a final offer settlement award constitutes a binding mandate to the public employer and the exclusive representative to take whatever actions are necessary to implement the award.