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**Government of the District of Columbia  
Public Employee Relations Board**

_____	)	
In the Matter of:	)	
	)	
District of Columbia	)	
Metropolitan Police Department,	)	
	)	PERB Case No. 01-A-05
Petitioner,	)	
	)	Opinion No. 662
and	)	
	)	
Fraternal Order of Police/Metropolitan	)	
Police Department Labor Committee	)	
(on behalf of Grievant Anthony Brown),	)	
	)	
Respondent.	)	
_____	)	

**DECISION AND ORDER**

On April 13, 2001, the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), filed an Arbitration Review Request (Request). MPD seeks review of an arbitration award (Award) which rescinded the termination imposed on a bargaining unit employee. MPD contends that the: (1) Arbitrator was without authority to grant the Award; and (2) Award is contrary to law and public policy. The Fraternal Order of Police/Metropolitan Police Department Labor Committee (FOP) opposes the Request.

The issue before the Board is whether “the award on its face is contrary to law and public policy” or whether “the arbitrator was without or exceeded his or her jurisdiction. . . .” D.C. Code Sec. 1-605.2(6). Upon consideration of the Request, we find that MPD has not established a statutory basis for our review. Therefore, pursuant to Board Rule 538.4, MPD’s request for review is denied.

MPD terminated the Grievant, a police officer for: (1) conduct unbecoming an officer which would “affect adversely the employee’s or the agency’s ability to perform effectively”; (2) conviction of a criminal or quasi-criminal offense; and (3) willfully and knowingly making an untruthful statement to a superior officer. Before ruling on the merits of the case, the Arbitrator determined that the Grievant’s termination was in violation of the procedural rights guaranteed to him by the parties’ collective bargaining agreement (CBA). Specifically, the Arbitrator concluded that MPD violated

Article 12, Section 7, of the parties' CBA when the Chief of Police failed to respond to the employee's appeal within the fifteen (15) day time limit. As a result, the Arbitrator rescinded the termination and reinstated the Grievant.<sup>1</sup>

MPD takes issue with the Arbitrator's Award. MPD asserts that the Arbitrator exceeded his authority by rescinding the Grievant's termination. Specifically, MPD claims that the Arbitrator: (1) rendered an award that conflicts with the express terms of the agreement; and (2) imposed an additional requirement not expressly provided in the agreement.

In support of its argument, MPD cites Article 12, Section 7, of the parties' CBA which provides as follows:

The employee shall be given fifteen (15) days advance notice in writing prior to the taking of an adverse action. Upon receipt of this notice, the employee may within ten (10) days appeal the action to the Chief of Police. **The Chief of Police shall respond to the employee's appeal with[in] (sic) fifteen (15) days.** In cases in which a timely appeal is filed, the adverse action shall not be taken until the Chief of Police has replied to the appeal. The reply of the Chief of Police will be the final agency action on the adverse action. (Emphasis Added)

MPD asserts that the plain language of the above-referenced provision of the CBA, does not impose a penalty for noncompliance of the fifteen (15) day time limit within which the Chief of Police "shall respond to the employee's appeal." Therefore, by imposing a penalty where none was expressly stated or intended, MPD contends that the Arbitrator added to and modified at least one provision of the CBA in violation of Article 19, Section 5(4). In addition, MPD claims that the Arbitrator issued an award that not only conflicts with the express terms of the agreement, but also imposes additional requirements not expressly provided for in the agreement.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Specifically, the Arbitrator ruled that MPD's failure to comply with the "15-day rule" warranted dismissal of the Grievant's termination. As a result, he opined that he did not need to reach a decision concerning allegations that MPD also violated the "45 day rule" and the "55 day rule".

<sup>2</sup>MPD relies on Dobbs, Inc. v. Local 614, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, which held that an arbitrator exceeds his authority if he adds to, subtracts from, or modifies the provisions of a collective bargaining agreement in arriving at a decision. Dobbs, Inc. v. Local 614, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, 813 F.2d 85 (6<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1987). In Dobbs the Court concluded that the Arbitrator created his own contract rather than apply the contract that was agreed upon by the parties. Specifically, the Arbitrator's award contradicted a table of penalties which was agreed to by the parties and contained in the collective bargaining agreement. Id. However, the present case involves a disagreement with the Arbitrator's interpretation of a

**Decision and Order**  
**PERB Case No. 01-A-05**  
**Page 3**

In light of the above, MPD's ground for review only involves a disagreement with the arbitrator's interpretation of Article 12, Section 7 of the parties' CBA. Moreover, MPD merely requests that we adopt its interpretation of the above-referenced provision of the CBA.

Based on the above and the Board's statutory basis for reviewing arbitration awards, MPD contends that the Arbitrator exceeded his authority by rescinding the termination. We disagree.

We have held that an arbitrator's authority is derived "from the parties' agreement and any applicable statutory and regulatory provision." D.C. Dept. of Public Works and AFSCME, Local 2091, 35 DCR 8186, Slip Op. No. 194, PERB Case No. 87-A-08 (1988). Furthermore, we have determined that an arbitrator does not exceed his authority by exercising his equitable power, unless it is expressly restricted by the parties' collective bargaining agreement.<sup>3</sup> See, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department and FOP/MPD Labor Committee, 39 DCR 6232, Slip Op. No. 282, PERB Case No. 92-A-04 (1992). In the present case, MPD does not cite any provision of the CBA which limits the Arbitrator's equitable power. Therefore, the Arbitrator had authority to rescind the termination and to reinstate the Grievant due to MPD's failure to comply with procedural rights guaranteed to the Grievant by the CBA.

In addition, we have held that "[b]y agreeing to submit the settlement of [a] grievance to arbitration, it [is] the Arbitrator's interpretation, not the Board's, that the parties have bargained for." University of the District of Columbia and University of the District of Columbia Faculty Association/NEA, 39 DCR 9628, Slip Op. No. 320 at p.2, PERB Case No 92-A-04 (1992). Also, we have found that by submitting a matter to arbitration, "the parties agree to be bound by the Arbitrator's interpretation of the parties agreement and related rules and regulations as well as his evidentiary findings and conclusions upon which the decision is based." University of the District of Columbia and University of the District of Columbia Faculty Association, *supra*. Moreover, "[t]he Board will not substitute its own interpretation or that of the Agency's for that of the duly designated arbitrator." District of Columbia Department of Corrections and International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local Union No. 246, 34 DCR 3616, Slip Op. No. 157 at p. 3, PERB Case No. 87-A-02 (1987).

MPD also contends that the Arbitrator's Award is contrary to law and public policy. We have held that a "disagreement with the arbitrator's interpretation. . . does not make the award contrary to law and public policy." AFGE, Local 1975 and Dept. of Public Works, Slip Op. No 413, PERB Case No. 95-A-02 (1995). To set aside an award as contrary to law and public policy, the Petitioner must present applicable law and definite public policy that mandates that the arbitrator arrive at a different result. See, AFGE, Local 631 and Dept. of Public Works, 45 DCR 6617, Slip Op. No. 365, PERB Case No. 93-A-03 (1993). In the present case, MPD's claim involves only a disagreement with the Arbitrator's interpretation of Article 12, Section 7 of the CBA. This is not a sufficient basis

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provision contained in the agreement. Therefore, Dobbs is not applicable.

<sup>3</sup>We note, that if the parties' collective bargaining agreement limits the arbitrator's equitable power, that limitation would be enforced.

**Decision and Order**  
**PERB Case No. 01-A-05**  
**Page 4**

for concluding that the: (1) Arbitrator has exceeded his authority; or (2) Award is contrary to law or public policy.

In addition, MPD asserts that the Award denies the agency the ability to discipline Officer Brown. However, this argument does not rely on a well-defined policy or legal precedent. Therefore, MPD has failed to point to any clear or legal public policy which the Award contravenes.

We find that the Arbitrator's conclusion is based on a thorough analysis and cannot be said to be clearly erroneous or contrary to law and public policy. For the reasons discussed, no statutory basis exist for setting aside the Award; the Request is therefore, denied.

**ORDER**

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:**

The Arbitration Review Request is denied.

**BY ORDER OF THE PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RELATIONS BOARD**  
Washington, D.C.

September 25, 2001

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

This is to certify that the attached Decision and Order in PERB Case No. 01-A-05 was transmitted via Fax and/or U.S. Mail to the following parties on this 26<sup>th</sup> day of September 2001.

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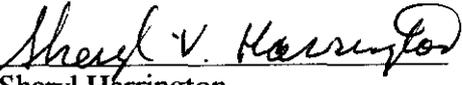
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