



Maine Human Rights Commission

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INVESTIGATOR'S REPORT COMMISSION No. E18-0420-A & -B March 17, 2020

Michelle Geaghan (Waterville)

v.

Coffee News/John Buckley¹ (Bangor)
Bill Buckley (Bangor)

I. Summary of the Case:

Michelle Geaghan alleged that Respondents discriminated against her based on her age and/or sex by terminating her employment. She further alleged that Respondents retaliated against her after she filed her Complaint with the Maine Human Rights Commission ("Commission") by voiding her severance agreement. Respondents denied discrimination and retaliation, positing that it laid her off due to financial reasons and could not have retaliated against her because she was no longer an employee. The Investigator conducted a preliminary investigation, which included reviewing the documents submitted by the parties, holding an Issues and Resolutions Conference ("IRC"), and requesting information from the parties. Based upon this information, the Investigator recommends a finding that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that Respondents discriminated against Complainant based on her age and/or sex. The Investigator recommends a finding that there are reasonable grounds to believe that Respondents retaliated against Complainant based on her Complaint.

II. Jurisdictional Data:

- 1) Date(s) of alleged discrimination: September 24, 2018 – December 4, 2018
- 2) Date complaint filed with the Commission: October 29, 2018
- 3) Respondent has four employees and is subject to the Maine Human Rights Act ("MHRA"), as well as state and employment regulations.
- 4) Complainant is not represented by counsel. Respondent is represented by Ryan Dumais, Esq.

¹ Complainant named Coffee News//John Buckley as one of the Respondents in her complaint; this Respondent provided that its legal name is Coffee News USA, Inc. Because Complainant did not amend her complaint to use the name provided, the name she used has been retained. John Buckley will be referred to herein as "Vice President", and Bill Buckley as "President".