



July 15, 2024

West North Avenue Development Authority  
2500 W. North Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21216

**Re: WHISTLEBLOWER RETALIATION AGAINST  
FORMER WNADA EMPLOYEE [REDACTED]**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of my client, [REDACTED] who was formerly employed by West North Avenue Development Authority (WNADA). This letter serves as a formal demand for relief concerning serious concerns regarding wrongful termination, workplace harassment, and whistleblower retaliation, which have given rise to legal claims against your organization. Additionally, a completed Whistleblower Complaint Form has been submitted to the Maryland Department of Budget & Management and is included as an enclosure with this letter.

**Factual Background**

[REDACTED] was employed at WNADA from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] until her coerced resignation on [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. During her tenure, [REDACTED] experienced multiple instances of workplace bullying, unethical performance evaluations, and retaliation after raising concerns about these issues. Specific instances include:

- On November 30, 2023, during a staff meeting, Chad Williams, the Executive Director of WNADA, explicitly indicated that certain applicants were pre-determined to receive funding. This statement was made in the presence of multiple staff members, including [REDACTED] perceived these remarks as unethical and indicative of predetermined outcomes which could potentially manipulate the grant process.
- On January 12, 2024, during the review of applicants for funding, Mr. Williams allegedly manipulated the scoring of applicants to favor certain

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entities, specifically emphasizing the inclusion of BARCO. [REDACTED] reported this incident as a misuse of authority and a potential violation of procurement ethics. This manipulation was directly observed by [REDACTED] during a meeting where applicant scores were discussed and altered.

- Subsequent to her reports, on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] received an unsatisfactory performance evaluation via DocuSign. This evaluation was unexpected and was not preceded by any formal feedback or discussion, which deviated from standard HR policies and previous feedback regarding her performance.
- On February 1, 2024, [REDACTED] escalated her concerns by sending an email to Governor Wes Moore, outlining her observations and concerns about potential unethical practices and pressures related to job security contingent on compliance with these practices.
- Following her escalation, [REDACTED] was placed on a performance improvement plan on [REDACTED] without justifiable basis. This plan outlined several performance targets and tasks, which [REDACTED] was required to complete within an unusually short timeframe.
- On [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] was presented with an ultimatum to resign or be terminated. This action was communicated to her via a meeting with Mr. Williams, where she was informed that her employment would be terminated effective immediately unless she chose to resign.
- Additionally, during her tenure, [REDACTED] was subjected to racially insensitive remarks by her supervisor, Chad Williams, who made comments suggesting that her actions were making a "black agency look bad." Furthermore, in a bizarre and unsupported claim, Mr. Williams accused [REDACTED] of suggesting that urban Black residents should be allowed to live in poverty conditions, which he attributed to her during a staff meeting on December 13, 2023. As a Black woman, [REDACTED] found these race-related comments to be not only inaccurate but also inappropriate, unprofessional, and discriminatory.

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## Legal Claims

We assert the following claims against WNADA:

- **Retaliation:** In violation of the Maryland Whistleblower Retaliation Statute, Md. Code, SPP § 5-305, [REDACTED] was retaliated against for disclosing information she believed evidenced gross mismanagement and violations of law.
- **Workplace Harassment and Hostile Work Environment:** [REDACTED] was subjected to severe and pervasive harassment that created a hostile work environment. This includes repeated instances of intimidation, threats to job security, and derogatory remarks made by her supervisor, Chad Williams.
- **Wrongful Termination:** [REDACTED] termination from WNADA was both procedurally flawed and substantively unjustified, constituting wrongful termination under the Maryland Fair Employment Practices Act.

## Demand for Relief

Given the severity of the violations and the impact on [REDACTED] we seek comprehensive relief including back pay, front pay, damages for emotional distress, and coverage of legal costs. We propose a settlement to avoid litigation, with the understanding that [REDACTED] is fully prepared to pursue her claims in court if necessary.

We look forward to your prompt response to discuss this matter further and to explore potential resolutions.

Sincerely,

Katherine Patton, Esq.  
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katpatton@quinnpatton.com

cc: Mark S. Petruskas, Principal Counsel for Maryland DHCD  
Via mark.petruskas@maryland.gov

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Enclosures: Whistleblower Complaint Form; Relevant Correspondence

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