

IN THE OHIO COURT OF CLAIMS

WILLIAM RUSSELL

Plaintiff

v.

CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Defendant

Case No. 2013-00138

2014 AUG 14 PM 3:10

Judge Patrick M. McGrath
Magistrate Holly T. Shaver

ANSWER TO FIRST
AMENDED COMPLAINT

For its answer to the First Amended Complaint, filed August 8, 2014, Defendant the Cleveland State University states as follows:

JURISDICTION & VENUE

1. Defendant admits Plaintiff brings this action for *alleged* age and disability discrimination (under R.C. 4112.02) and for *alleged* retaliation (under R.C. 4112.02(I)). Defendant denies all remaining allegations in Paragraph 1 of the First Amended Complaint.

2. Defendant admits Plaintiff brings this action for *alleged* violations of the FMLA (under 29 U.S.C. 2611 *et seq.*) and for *alleged* age discrimination (under 29 U.S.C. 621 *et seq.*) Defendant denies all remaining allegations in Paragraph 2 of the First Amended Complaint.

3. Defendant denies the allegations in Paragraph 3 of the First Amended Complaint.

4. Defendant lacks sufficient knowledge or information to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations in Paragraph 4 of the First Amended Complaint, and therefore denies the same.

5. Paragraph 5 is admitted insofar as it alleges that Cleveland State University is a state university located in Cuyahoga County, Ohio. Defendant denies all remaining allegations in Paragraph 5 of the First Amended Complaint.

ON COMPUTER

6. Defendant lacks sufficient knowledge or information to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations in Paragraph 6 of the First Amended Complaint, and therefore denies the same.

7. Defendant denies the allegations in Paragraph 7 of the First Amended Complaint.

PARTIES

8. In response to Paragraph 8 of the First Amended Complaint, Defendant admits Plaintiff was employed by Cleveland State University. Defendant denies all remaining allegations in Paragraph 8 of the First Amended Complaint.

9-10. The allegations in Paragraphs 9 and 10 of the First Amended Complaint are pure statements of law, and do not require a response.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION (Age Discrimination in Violation of O.R.C. 4112 and ADEA)

11. Defendant incorporates its answers to Paragraphs 1 through 10 of the First Amended Complaint as if fully rewritten herein. Further answering, Defendant denies the allegations set forth in Paragraph 11 of the First Amended Complaint.

12. Defendant lacks sufficient knowledge or information to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations in Paragraph 12 of the First Amended Complaint, and therefore denies the same.

13-22. Defendant denies the allegations in Paragraphs 13 through 22 of the First Amended Complaint.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION (Disability Discrimination in Violation of O.R.C. 4112)

23. Defendant incorporates its answers to Paragraphs 1 through 22 of the First Amended Complaint as if fully rewritten herein. Further answering, Defendant denies the allegations set forth in Paragraph 23 of the First Amended Complaint.

24. Defendant lacks sufficient knowledge or information to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations in Paragraph 24 of the First Amended Complaint, and therefore denies the same.

25-32. Defendant denies the allegations in Paragraphs 25 through 32 of the First Amended Complaint.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION
(Retaliation in Violation of O.R.C. 4112 and ADEA)

33. Defendant incorporates its answers to Paragraphs 1 through 32 of the First Amended Complaint as if fully rewritten herein. Further answering, Defendant denies the allegations set forth in Paragraph 33 of the First Amended Complaint.

34-38. Defendant denies the allegations in Paragraphs 34 through 38 of the First Amended Complaint.

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION
(FMLA Interference and Retaliation)

39. Defendant incorporates its answers to Paragraphs 1 through 38 of the First Amended Complaint as if fully rewritten herein. Further answering, Defendant denies the allegations set forth in Paragraph 39 of the First Amended Complaint.

40. Defendant denies the allegations in Paragraph 40 of the First Amended Complaint.

41. The allegations in Paragraph 41 of the First Amended Complaint are pure statements of law, and do not require a response. Nevertheless, Defendant lacks sufficient knowledge or information to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations in Paragraph 41 of the First Amended Complaint, and therefore denies the same.

42. Defendant lacks sufficient knowledge or information to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations in Paragraph 42 of the First Amended Complaint, and therefore denies the same.

43-48. Defendant denies the allegations in Paragraphs 43 through 48 of the First Amended Complaint.

FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION
(Breach of Contract)

49. Defendant incorporates its answers to Paragraphs 1 through 48 of the First Amended Complaint as if fully rewritten herein. Further answering, Defendant denies the allegations set forth in Paragraph 49 of the First Amended Complaint.

50. In response to Paragraph 50 of the First Amended Complaint, Defendant admits Plaintiff was employed by Cleveland State University. Defendant denies all remaining allegations in Paragraph 50 of the First Amended Complaint.

51. The allegations in Paragraph 51 of the First Amended Complaint are pure statements of law, and do not require a response.

52. In response to Paragraph 52 of the First Amended Complaint, Defendant admits that it possesses a collective bargaining agreement. Defendant denies all remaining allegations in Paragraph 52 of the First Amended Complaint.

53. In response to Paragraph 53 of the First Amended Complaint, Defendant admits that a collective bargaining agreement was in effect during Plaintiff's employment. Defendant denies all remaining allegations in Paragraph 53 of the First Amended Complaint.

54. In response to Paragraph 54 of the First Amended Complaint, Defendant admits that Plaintiff was laid-off due to the reorganization of the Department of Student Life. Defendant denies all remaining allegations in Paragraph 54 of the First Amended Complaint.

55. In response to Paragraph 55 of the First Amended Complaint, Plaintiff has failed to provide a copy of the agreement in question. Further answering Paragraph 55, the agreement in question speaks for itself and any allegations that are inconsistent with that agreement are denied. Defendant denies all remaining allegations in Paragraph 55 of the First Amended Complaint.

56. Defendant denies the allegations in Paragraph 56 of the First Amended Complaint.

57. In response to Paragraph 57 of the First Amended Complaint, Plaintiff has failed to provide a copy of the agreement in question. Further answering Paragraph 57, the agreement in question speaks for itself and any allegations that are inconsistent with that agreement are denied. Defendant denies all remaining allegations in Paragraph 57 of the First Amended Complaint.

58-61. Defendant denies the allegations in Paragraphs 58 through 61 of the First Amended Complaint.

AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES

1. This Court lacks jurisdiction to consider Plaintiff's claims.
2. The First Amended Complaint fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted.
3. The First Amended Complaint is barred by the statute of limitations.
4. Defendant is immune from liability.
5. Defendant enjoys a privilege that precludes liability.
6. Defendant acted in good faith and in compliance with the law.
7. Defendant acted throughout with legitimate, non-discriminatory reasons and/or would have taken the same action regardless of any alleged improper motivation.
8. Defendants' actions were based on sound business judgments.
9. Plaintiff failed to exhaust his administrative remedies.
10. Some of Plaintiff's claims are barred and should be dismissed to the extent Plaintiff is equitably estopped from asserting those claims, has waived those claims, or has acted with bad faith and "unclean hands."
11. Defendant's actions were taken in good faith for legitimate, non-discriminatory, and non-retaliatory business reasons.
12. Some of Plaintiff's claims are barred by the 11th Amendment to The United States Constitution.

13. Some of Plaintiff's claims are barred by the applicable statute of limitations.
14. Some or all of Plaintiff's punitive damage claims are barred by R.C. 3345.40.
15. Some of Plaintiff's claims for non-economic damages – including emotional distress, attorneys' fees, and any other non-“out-of-pocket” damages – are capped by R.C. 3345.40.
16. Some of Plaintiff's damage claims are subject to set-off for any collateral source benefits, pursuant to R.C. 3345.40.
17. Plaintiff failed to mitigate his damages, if any.
18. Plaintiff is not entitled to the damages or relief sought in the First Amended Complaint.
19. Every allegation contained in the First Amended Complaint that is not specifically admitted, denied or denied for lack of knowledge is denied.
20. Defendant reserves the right to amend its answer to add additional defenses.

WHEREFORE, Defendant asks that the First Amended Complaint be dismissed at Plaintiff's cost and that judgment be entered in Defendant's favor.

Respectfully submitted,

MICHAEL DE WINE
Ohio Attorney General



EMILY M. SIMMONS (0082519)
Assistant Section Chief

RANDALL W. KNUTTI (0022388)
Principal Assistant Attorney General

AMY S. BROWN (0079650)
Associate Assistant Attorney General

Ohio Attorney General's Office
Court of Claims Defense Section
150 East Gay Street, Floor 18
Columbus, OH 43215

T: (614) 466-7447 | F: (614) 644-9185

Emily.Simmons@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov

Randall.Knutti@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov

Amy.Brown@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov

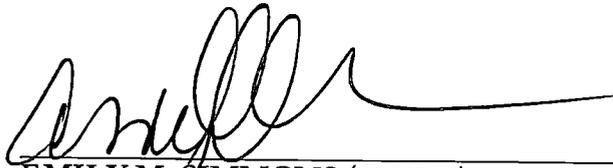
COUNSEL FOR DEFENDANT

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

On August 14, 2014, we sent a copy of this document via electronic mail to Plaintiff's

Counsel:

Mark Griffin (mgriffin@tpgfirm.com)



EMILY M. SIMMONS (0082519)

RANDALL W. KNUTTI (0022388)

AMY S. BROWN (0079650)

Assistant Attorneys General