

APPENDIX

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**IN THE SUPREME COURT
OF PENNSYLVANIA
MIDDLE DISTRICT**

WILLIAM PETERMAN, JR., : No. 436 MAL 2025

Petitioner

v.

**: Petition for Allowance
: of Appeal from the Order
: of the Superior Court**

MAPLE PRESS COMPANY, :

Respondent

ORDER

PER CURIAM

AND NOW, this 19th day of February, 2026,

the Petition for Allowance of Appeal is **DENIED**.

A True Copy Elizabeth E. Zisk
As Of 02/19/2026

Attest: 
Chief Clerk
Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

J-A15004-25

Filed 07/30/2025

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF PENNSYLVANIA
MIDDLE DISTRICT**

WILLIAM PETERMAN, JR. : No. 1696 MDA 2024

Appellant

v.

MAPLE PRESS COMPANY :

ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

THAT the application filed June 3, 2025, requesting
reargument of the decision dated May 30, 2025,
is **DENIED**.

PER CURIAM

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**NON-PRECEDENTIAL DECISION
– SEE SUPERIOR COURT O.P. 65.37**

WILLIAM PETERMAN, JR. : IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
: OF PENNSYLVANIA

Appellant :

v. :

MAPLE PRESS COMPANY : No. 1696 MDA 2024

Appeal from the Order Entered October 25, 2024

In the Court of Common Pleas of York County

Civil Division at No(s): 2024-SU-002044

BEFORE: BOWES, J., STABILE, J., AND STEVENS, P.J.E.*

MEMORANDUM BY BOWES, J.: **FILED: MAY 30, 2025**

William Peterman, Jr. ("Plaintiff") appeals *pro se* from the order that sustained the preliminary objections of Maple Press Company ("Defendant") and dismissed his complaint. We dismiss this appeal.

Given our disposition, a detailed case history is unnecessary. Briefly, Plaintiff filed a complaint in July 2024 in the York County Court of Common Pleas

*Former Justice specially assigned to the Superior Court.

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against Defendant alleging one count of employment discrimination. Therein, he asserted that he had applied for an open press operator position with Defendant and been hired in January 2024, but the offer was rescinded the following week due to market conditions. When Defendant advertised new machine operator openings in the summer of 2024, Plaintiff again applied but was not hired, allegedly because he was overqualified. Plaintiff maintained that, given his previous hiring, the rejection of his application must have been founded upon discrimination.

Defendant filed preliminary objections to the complaint in the nature of a demurrer. It observed that Plaintiff did not allege that he first filed a claim with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission ("PHRC"). Defendant further contended that the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act ("PHRA") is the exclusive remedy for claims of unlawful discrimination, and that Plaintiff's failure to pursue relief through the PHRC deprived the court of jurisdiction over the claim. Defendant additionally asserted that, in any event, being overqualified is not a protected class under the PHRA.

Plaintiff filed a response in opposition to the objections which, in large part, was a collection of

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words conveying little discernable meaning. **See, e.g.**, Response to Preliminary Objections, 8/30/24, at ¶ 9 ("The objection by Defendant is that discrimination must course through PHRC. However, the PHRC limits its service to protected classes. Plaintiff asserts, needlessly per judicial accreditation, that discrimination is possible outside the protected classes. And, thereby, all discrimination does not require a course through protected classes; neither then a stipulation of the PHRC. The objection is irrelevant, based on the boundary of scope, and additionally, based on the allegation of Defendant pertaining a failure of protected class."); *id.* at ¶ 33 ("The Defendant smokes fear into the litigation, by way of presumptiveness of status quo. To make aware for the court the potential of a procedural stipulation is at once a capacity of Defense and of Judgment (to Decision); that if the objection fails Defense, then it can still carry influence independently for Judgment."). So far as the trial court was able to discern, Plaintiff's position was that the nature of Defendant's discrimination was unknown, yet not based upon Plaintiff's membership in a protected class. Thus, his claim fell outside the scope of the PHRA, which only prohibited discrimination against

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specified groups, and, consequently, he was not obligated to file his claim with PHRC before bringing the instant action.

The trial court sustained Defendant's preliminary objections and dismissed Plaintiff's complaint by order of October 25, 2024. In an accompanying opinion, the court explained that, under Pennsylvania law, a *prima facie* case of employment discrimination requires a plaintiff to show membership in a protected class, qualification for the job for which he applied, a rejected application, and the employer's continued recruitment of applications of equal qualifications. **See** Trial Court Opinion, 10/25/24, at 7 (pagination supplied). The court further observed that the right to a remedy for employment discrimination is established by the PHRA, which requires exhaustion of the administrative remedies vested in the PHRC before actions may be pursued in court. **Id.** (citing, *inter alia*, **Clay v. Advanced Computer Applications, Inc.**, 559 A.2d 917 (Pa. 1989)).

This timely appeal followed. In this Court, Plaintiff has filed a brief that, in addition to suffering from the same inscrutable prose style as quoted above, does not adhere to the requirements of a host of our Rules of Appellate Procedure. In particular, his brief fails

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to comply with Pa.R.A.P. 2111(a)(1) (statement of jurisdiction); Pa.R.A.P. 2111(a)(3) (statement of the scope and standard of review); Pa.R.A.P. 2111(a)(4) statement of questions involved); and Pa.R.A.P. 2111(a)(6) (summary of argument). Further, Plaintiff does not attempt to develop any argument that is supported by citations to pertinent legal authority as is required by Pa.R.A.P. 2119(a) and (b). Indeed, the only citations within Plaintiff's argument are to the trial court's opinion. He proffers no countervailing authority to explain how or why the trial court should have allowed further litigation of his undefined discrimination claims.

As we have cautioned:

Although this Court is willing to construe liberally materials filed by a *pro se* litigant, *pro se* status generally confers no special benefit upon an appellant. A *pro se* litigant must comply with the procedural rules set forth in the Pennsylvania Rules of the Court. Any layperson choosing to represent himself or herself in a legal proceeding must, to some reasonable extent, assume the risk that his or her lack of expertise and legal training will prove his or her undoing.

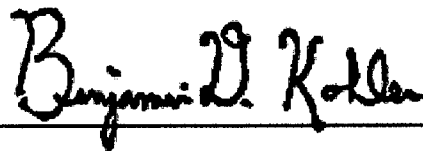
***Smithson v. Columbia Gas of PA/NiSource*, 264 A.3d 755, 760 (Pa.Super. 2021) (cleaned up).**

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Plaintiff's noncompliance has left us unable to conduct meaningful review. **See, e.g., Commonwealth v. Gilliam**, 249 A.3d 257, 271 (Pa.Super. 2021) ("It is not the role of this Court to develop Appellant's argument."); **Butler v. Illes**, 747 A.2d 943, 944 (Pa.Super. 2000) ("When issues are not properly raised and developed in briefs, when briefs are wholly inadequate to present specific issues for review, a court will not consider the merits thereof." (cleaned up)). Therefore, we dismiss this appeal without considering its merits. **See** Pa.R.A.P. 2101 ("[I]f the defects are in the brief or reproduced record of the appellant and are substantial, the appeal or other matter may be . . . dismissed.").

Appeal dismissed. Oral argument scheduled for June 17, 2025, is cancelled.

Judgment Entered.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Benjamin D. Kohler", is written over a horizontal line.

Benjamin D. Kohler, Esq.
Prothonotary

Date: 5/30/2025

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**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
OF YORK COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
CIVIL DIVISION**

WILLIAM PETERMAN, JR., : No. 2024-SU-002044
Plaintiff :

v. :

MAPLE PRESS COMPANY, :
Defendant : Civil Action- Law

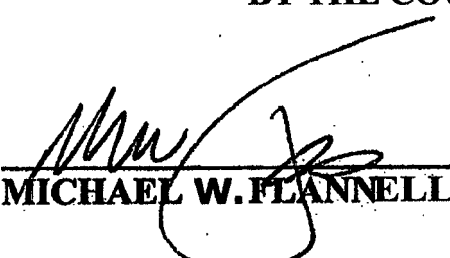
Appearances: For the Plaintiff: *Pro Se*
For the Defendants: Michael J. Corcenzi, Esquire

ORDER

AND NOW, this 25th day of October 2024, upon
consideration of the above-captioned matter, **IT IS HEREBY
ORDERED** that the Defendant's preliminary objections,
which were filed on August 22, 2024, are **SUSTAINED**.
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Complaint filed
in this matter is **DISMISSED**.

The Prothonotary is directed to serve copies of this Order
on counsel and parties as required by law.

BY THE COURT,



MICHAEL W. FLANNELLY, JUDGE

**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
OF YORK COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
CIVIL DIVISION**

WILLIAM PETERMAN, JR.,	:	No. 2024-SU-002044
Plaintiff	:	
	:	
v.	:	
	:	
MAPLE PRESS COMPANY,	:	
Defendant	:	Civil Action- Law

Appearances: For the Plaintiff: *Pro Se*
 For the Defendants: Michael J. Corcenzi, Esquire

OPINION

This matter comes before the Court on Preliminary Objections filed by Maple Press Company (hereinafter, "Maple Press"), to a Complaint filed by William Peterman Jr. (hereinafter, "Peterman").

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On July 11, 2024, in the York County Court of Common Pleas, Peterman initiated a suit against Maple Press by filing a Complaint. Maple Press filed Preliminary Objections to the Complaint filed on August 22, 2024. On August 30, 2024, a Brief in Support of the Preliminary Objections was filed by Maple Press. A Response to the Preliminary Objections of Maple Press was filed by Peterman on August 30, 2024. On October 9, 2024, Maple Press filed a Praecipe to List for One Judge Disposition. A Judicial Assignment Order was issued on October 10, 2024, assigning the above-captioned

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matter to Judge Michael W. Flannelly. An Objection to the Praecipe to List for One Judge Disposition and the Judicial Assignment Order was then filed by Peterman on October 13, 2024. A Judicial Assignment Order was issued once again on October 15, 2024, assigning the above-captioned matter to Judge Michael W. Flannelly.

BACKGROUND

In December of 2023, Maple Press was offering employment opportunities to individuals in a general fashion, by way of going through an application process. Pl.'s Compl. at "Facts", ¶ 1. Peterman applied for employment with Maple Press, by going through their application process. *Id.* at ¶ 2. Peterman was selected to undergo the next step with the company, which was an interview, he had an in-person interview with someone by the name of Jeffrey Hall. *Id.* at ¶ 2. Peterman was also subjected to a diagnostic test evaluation, which was approximately 25 minutes in length, and consisted of a multiple-choice format. *Id.*

Following the completion of the diagnostic test evaluation, it is averred by Peterman that the individual who interviewed him stated that he scored "off the chart." *Id.* It is further averred by Peterman that the interviewer then informed him that there would be a position becoming available soon, that he may be suited for. *Id.* The position that was to become available was a "Press Operator," and in that position an employee would be paid approximately \$25 per hour. *Id.* Peterman was offered employment with Maple Press, and he was given the start date of January 29, 2024. *Id.* at ¶ 3. Following the offer of

employment, but prior to Peterman's start date, Peterman was contacted by Maple Press and the employment offer was rescinded due to market fluctuation. *Id.* at ¶ 5.

Peterman then applied once again for a different position with Maple Press, around March or April of 2024. *Id.* at ¶ 6. However, Peterman did not receive a response from Maple Press regarding his second application for employment. *Id.* at ¶ 7. Peterman avers that a multitude of employment positions became available at Maple Press in June of 2024, which is assumed to be an indicator that market fluctuation was no longer an issue. *Id.* at ¶ 8. On June 21, 2024, Peterman applied once again for an employment position at Maple Press. *Id.* at ¶ 9. The specific position that he applied for was a Machine Operator, for which he avers that the minimum qualifications for such a position is prior machine experience. *Id.* at ¶ 9, 11. Peterman states that he has a bachelor's degree, a CPA license, prior machine experience, warehouse experience, and forklift experience. *Id.* at ¶ 12.

In the Complaint filed by Peterman, he sets forth one sole count against Maple Press, and that count is a claim for discrimination. It is attested by Peterman, that the highest qualifications for the position to which he applied, were essentially overlooked without just cause. *Id.* at "Count 1", ¶ 1. Peterman argues that Maple Press's actions constitute discrimination, and that the company engaged in such behavior to fill employment positions with only lesser qualified individuals. *Id.* It is Peterman's position, that Maple Press previously hired him, so he is not overqualified for the employment position. *Id.* at ¶ 2. It is further argued by

Peterman, that since he was previously hired by Maple Press, some form of priority should have been given regarding his employment application. *Id.* at ¶ 3. Peterman avers that he was initially hired by Maple Press, and that employment opportunity was then rescinded due to market fluctuation, but there has now been a correction within the market so there should have been no basis for the rejection of employment. *Id.* at ¶ 5. It is Peterman's position that Maple Press "willfully denied a previously qualified and hired applicant without potential cause." *Id.* at ¶ 8.

As a result, Peterman is demanding that a judgment be entered in his favor and against Maple Press, that he be rewarded compensatory damages in an amount consistent with unemployment-compensation practices at a total of \$18,595.20, punitive damages in the amount of \$1,000.00, along with legal costs and attorneys' fees.

LEGAL STANDARD

Pursuant to Rule 1028 of the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure, a party may file preliminary objections to a pleading based upon a number of grounds. See Pa. R.C.P. 1028(a)(1)-(8). "In order to sustain preliminary objections, it must appear with certainty that the law will not permit recovery, and where any doubt exists as to whether the preliminary objections should be sustained, the doubt must be resolved in favor of overruling the preliminary objections." *Pennsylvania State Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police v. Dep't of Conservation & Natural Res.*, 909, A.2d 413 at 415-16, *aff'd*, 592 Pa. 304, 924 A.2d 1203 (2007).

When a court is ruling on preliminary objections, “the court must consider the evidence in the light most favorable to the non-moving party.” *Maleski by Taylor v. DP Realty Trust*, 653 A.2d 54, 61 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 1994). “In reviewing preliminary objections, all material facts averred in the complaint, and all reasonable inferences that can be drawn from them, are admitted as true.” *Seitel Data, Ltd. v. Ctr. Twp.*, 92 A.3d 851, 859 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2014) (internal citations omitted). “[A] court need not [however,] accept as true conclusions of law, unwarranted inferences, argumentative allegations, or expressions of opinion.” *Id.* (internal citations omitted).

DISCUSSION

Pursuant to Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure 1028 (a)(4) preliminary objections may be filed by any party to any pleading based on legal insufficiency of the pleading, often referred to as a demurrer. Pa. R.C.P. 1028 (a)(4); Def.’s Prelim. Obj. at ¶ 11. A preliminary objection that is asserted on the basis of a demurrer can only be sustained “where the complaint is clearly insufficient to establish the pleader’s right to relief.” *Id.* at ¶ 12 citing *Bash v. Bell Tel. Co. of Pennsylvania*, 411 Pa.Super. 347, 601 A.2d 825, 828 (1992). To test the legal sufficiency of a pleading, all well-pleaded, material, relevant facts are admitted as true, and every inference that can be deduced from the facts provided. *Id.* However, any conclusions or averments of law set forth by the pleader are not considered to be admitted as true, under the standards for a demurrer, *Id.*

It is Maple Press's understanding that Peterman's argument is that he has been discriminated against by Maple Press as they did not hire him for the press operator position due to Peterman being overqualified. Def.'s Prelim. Obj. at ¶ 8. Maple Press cites to the case of *Weaver v. Harpster*, in which the Court stated, "the legislature had made the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act the exclusive state law remedy for unlawful discrimination, preempting the advancement of common law claims for wrongful discharge based on claims of discrimination." *Id.* at ¶ 13 citing *Weaver v. Harpster*, 601 Pa. 488, 975 A.2d 555 at n. 10 (2009). Maple Press argues that the Supreme Court has consistently held that in cases of discrimination, parties must file a complaint with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission. Def.'s Br. in Supp. at pg. 3, ¶ 2. It is Maple Press's position that Peterman's Complaint should be dismissed, as he failed to allege that he first filed a complaint for discrimination with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, as required by law. Def.'s Prelim. Obj. at ¶ 9, 14, 16.

Furthermore, Maple Press argues that the statutory scheme established by the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission through the authority given to them by the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, will be frustrated if individuals are allowed to circumvent the process that has been but in place, and simply file a complaint within the Court of Common Pleas. *Id.* at ¶ 14 citing *Clay v. Advanced Computer Applications, Inc.*, 522 Pa. 86, 559 A.2d 917 (1989). Maple Press avers that if the Court deems it has the jurisdiction to rule on this matter, that Peterman has still failed to properly allege a discrimination claim based upon

the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, as being an overqualified applicant is not a protected class under the Act, an overqualified applicant is not a protected class under federal law, and the claim is time-barred by the 180 day statute of limitations prescribed in the Act. *Id.* at ¶ 17-18. Therefore, Maple Press request that the Complaint be dismissed with prejudice. *Id.* at ¶ 19.

In response, Peterman argues that the statute of limitations has not run, and that Maple Press has misconstrued the date of which Peterman is alleging discrimination occurred. P1.'s Resp. at ¶ 4-5. Peterman avers that the cause of action accrued in June 2024, as opposed to December 2023, and therefore the statute of limitations has not run *Id.* Next, Peterman argues that he did not allege discrimination on the basis of being an overqualified applicant, and that Maple Press has misrepresented his claim. *Id.* at ¶ 8. Peterman further argues in response to Maple Press's argument that an "overqualified applicant" is not a protected class under the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, that discrimination can occur outside of the listed protected classes under the statute and that what is listed as a protected class is not an "exhaustive" list. *Id.* at ¶ 9, 18. It is Peterman's position, that some form of discrimination occurred, but the specific form of discrimination is unknown and thereby the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act is not relevant. *Id.* at ¶ 11.

Peterman avers that if the courts dismiss this case, then the case will ultimately only be denied at the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission. *Id.* at ¶ 12. It is his position that if he did file a claim with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission first and it was dismissed, "to dismiss the case

is never to hear the case.” *Id.* It is argued by Peterman that a claim for discrimination is permitted outside the scope of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, because the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act is not conclusive. *Id.* at ¶ 15. Peterman then concludes that the preliminary objections filed by Maple Press should be overruled, as Maple Press “habitually violates trust and breaks integrity.” *Id.* at ¶ 25.

To sustain a claim for discrimination, the Court has established in the case of *General Electric Corp. v. Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission*, a four-prong test “which provides that, for a complainant to establish a prima facie case of employment discrimination, he must show that: (1) he is a member of a protected minority, (2) he applied for a job for which he was qualified, (3) he was rejected, and (4) the employer continued to seek applicants of equal qualifications.” *Harrisburg Sch. Dist. V. Com., Pennsylvania Human Relations Comm’n*, 77 Pa.Cmwlt. 594, 466 A.2d 760,762 (1983). Once a complainant can establish a prima facie case of employment discrimination, they will have created a rebuttable presumption that the employer engaged in unlawful discrimination. *Id.* at 598.

The right to a remedy for discrimination that has occurred in employment, is established by the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. *Clay v. Advanced Computer Applications, Inc.*, 522 Pa. 86, 559 A.2d 917 (1989). The Pennsylvania Human Relations Act vests the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission “with authority to investigate allegations of unlawful discrimination and, if probable cause exists to credit the allegations, to endeavor to eliminate the asserted unlawful

discrimination.” *Weaver v. Harpster*, 601 Pa. 488, 505, 975 A.2d 555, 565 (2009). Furthermore, it was established by the legislature that the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission would have the exclusive authority to remedy different forms of discrimination, as it was determined that “only an administrative agency with broad remedial powers, exercising particular expertise [sic], could cope effectively with the pervasive problem of unlawful discrimination.” *Id.* The purpose of the legislature making the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission the exclusive authority for remedying discrimination, was to keep the claims out of the court of common pleas until all administrative remedies have been exhausted. *Id.* Peterman does not cite to any law, or case law, that would exclude him from abiding by the procedure prescribed or the authority of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission. As a result, Peterman was required to file a complaint with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission prior to filing an action at the Court of Common Pleas.

The Court would also like to specify, that a condition that a party must file a complaint with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission first, does not exclude a party’s right to file a claim with the courts. The Pennsylvania Human Relations Act provides:

“in cases involving a claim of discrimination, if a complainant invokes the procedures set forth in this act, that individual’s right of action in the courts of the Commonwealth shall not be foreclosed. If within one (1) year after the filing of a complaint with the Commission, the Commission dismisses the complaint or has not entered into a conciliation agreement to which the complainant is a party, the Commission

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must so notify the complainant. On receipt of such a notice the complainant shall be able to bring an action in the courts of common pleas of the Commonwealth based on the right to freedom from discrimination granted by this act." 43 P.S. § 962

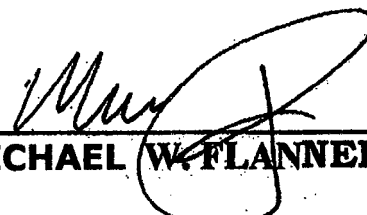
As a result, the preliminary objection set forth by Maple Press to Count I of Peterman's complaint is sustained, and Count I is dismissed.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons set forth above, Maple Press's preliminary objections to the Complaint filed in this matter are **SUSTAINED**.

BY THE COURT,

Date: October 25, 2024



MICHAEL W. FLANNELLY, JUDGE



Pennsylvania
Human Relations Commission

November 17, 2025

William Peterman Jr
230 Elizabeth Lane #4
Manchester, PA 17345

RE: William Peterman Jr vs. The Maple Press Company
PHRC Case No. 202401478

Dear William,

It has been at least one year since you filed your complaint with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission. This is to notify you that you now have the right to bring an action in the appropriate Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas based on the alleged violations of the PHRA Act contained in your Commission complaint. This right is provided under Section 12(c) of the Human Relations Act, 43, P.S. § 962(c).

Please be advised that you are not required to file such an action in the State Court of Common Pleas. The Commission is continuing to process your case, and we will make every effort to resolve it as soon as possible. If we are not notified otherwise, we will assume that you want the Commission to continue handling your case.

If you do file a complaint in a Court of Common Pleas, the Commission will dismiss your complaint. This means that you will be unable to have the Commission decide your case even if your complaint is dismissed in State Court because of a procedural error.

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Procedural errors may include filing the complaint in State Court in the wrong county or filing in State Court after your time to file has expired. For this reason, you should make every effort to assure that any complaint you file in State Court will be properly filed before you file it.

If you believe you might want to take your case to State Court, we suggest that you consult a private attorney about representing you in that action. This should be done before you file the complaint so that your attorney may advise you on the best course of action for you to take.

Should you file a complaint in State Court, you are required by Section 12(c)(2) of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act to serve the Human Relations Commission with a copy of the Court complaint. This copy must be served on the Commission at the same time you file it in Court. The copy is to be sent to the investigator assigned to your case.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, please feel free to contact the investigator who is handling your case.

Sincerely,
Enforcement Division
PA Human Relations Commission

cc: