

TRENTON SUED OVER LAYOFFS



When layoffs come the process can be emotional for everyone involved. Though the person who is hardest hit is the one who is now out of job and they can often feel personally targeted by the system. For most of us those feelings are pushed aside and we choose to simply begin the long search for new work. For other people who feel like they had a reason to be personally targeted for layoffs by their employer there is another option. They can sue in hopes of getting their jobs, and their incomes, back without having to put in applications and find another job. That is the case for one Mr. Robert Tokarcik who has chosen to file a suit against the city of Trenton over the loss of his job, which he claims was not about the city budget but instead about his actions. Robert Tokarcik was laid off in a mass layoff action in September. During that layoff action the city of Trenton decided to get rid of about 150 of the city level workers in order to cut from their cash strapped budget. He is alleging that the choice to lay him off is not because of budget cutbacks, but because he is a whistle blower. Earlier in the year he reported what thought was illegal behavior regarding the distribution and use of permits in the city. He reported that one of the plumbing contractors, who will remain nameless at this time, as the allegations have not been proven currently, was taking bids from the city and then selling these bids to other plumbing companies. Jim Manahan, the council for Mr. Tokarcik, told a [reporter for NJ.com](#) the following about the suit, "He went to work every day and tried to do his job. For whatever reason he was viewed as a troublemaker and that it was better to get rid of him." Sadly, this description could fit a lot of people who were laid off in the last few years as many workers who were cut down in the name of budget were simply trying to do their jobs to the best of their abilities. Tokarcik used to be the city's only plumbing inspector, and after his layoff a private company had to be brought in to complete the inspections for the city's construction projects and renovations. The company in question is EIC Inspection Agency, which is based in Jersey City. The acting director of the city's inspections department, Cleveland Thompson, spoke out against the move. Under the current arrangement the contractor keeps the bulk of the fees from the permits that are issued. Under the old arrangement the city kept all of the funds, though when you look at the numbers that is not as much money as you may think. The city was paying out about \$111,000 each year for Mr. Tokarcik's salary and benefits, and he only collected about \$131,800 in permit fees during the course of the 2010-2011 year. So, it may actually be that allowing a contractor to take a piece of the fees, even if it is a large piece, may be more profitable. Currently Mr. Tokarcik is not the only former Trenton city employee who is looking to sue the city over their termination. Several other employees have filed suit against the city for wrongful termination as well. The outcomes of the majority of these suits are currently pending.

<https://blog.granted.com/>