



Rutgers faculty and staff AFT locals. Online at [www.afrutgers.org](http://www.afrutgers.org).

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**State Commission Orders Rutgers Management to Defend Contract Breach**  
*Rutgers unions advance collaborative legal strategy in response to pay freeze*

NEW BRUNSWICK... The state Public Employees Relations Commission (PERC) today approved a jointly submitted order to show cause for unions representing 10,000 Rutgers workers, forcing university management to defend its unilateral pay freeze. The unions are arguing for expedited arbitration, which would offer a speedy resolution for the breach of contract claim. The challenge arises from university management's announcement that it would refuse to pay contracted raises. These raises were originally due in 2009, but the unions agreed to defer until this year in the same pattern as state worker deals.

The charges were delivered to PERC late Wednesday in Trenton following a boisterous rally at Rutgers Board of Governors meeting in New Brunswick. The collaborating unions represent a majority of Rutgers workers ranging from professors and doctors to administrative staff, maintenance and janitors including Rutgers Council of AAUP-AFT Chapters (full and part-time faculty, graduate workers, postdoctoral workers and EOF counselors), Union of Rutgers Administrators-AFT (staff), AFSCME Locals 888 (maintenance and janitorial) and 1761 (clerical) and SEIU/CIR (health center doctors).

"PERC has consistently held that refusing to implement contractually-required salary increases as a bargaining position is an unfair practice," said Bennet Zurofsky, one of the cooperating attorneys and counsel for the Union of Rutgers Administrators-American Federation of Teachers (URA-AFT). "I believe this case necessitates injunctive relief to remedy the unilateral withholding of agreed-upon pay raises."

Leaders of the effected units who bargained last year's wage deferral alleged that management's actions critically undermined its credibility in bargaining. "In light of the assurances that the deferred raises agreed to last year would be paid, it is impossible for the AAUP-AFT to have any confidence that Rutgers will honor its clear contractual commitments in the future," said Rutgers AAUP-AFT faculty union president Adrienne Eaton.

[MORE]



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While Rutgers management reneges on agreements modeled after state worker deals that Governor Christie has announced he will honor, union members are continuing to call on state legislators and the Rutgers Board of Governors to direct management to honor their bargains. Wednesday's charges seek expedited arbitration to avoid management delay tactics designed to discourage workers from standing up for their rights and weaken their unions, according to Zurofsky.

The meeting with PERC will take place on July 7 in Trenton. "Short of honoring the original agreements, expedited arbitration is the most efficient way to vindicate the workers' rights," Zurofsky said. "It would afford Rutgers a full opportunity to present any defenses it may assert to its failure to pay the scheduled salary increases. If the unions prevail, as they believe they will, a prompt arbitration award will avoid irreparably harm not only to the current relationship between the parties, but also to the negotiation of the next full round of contracts."

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