

Angelita Zayas



Chief Thaddeus Reddish
Director of Security

NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Tel: 475-220-1681
Fax: 203-936-5228

April 15, 2021

**VIA FIRST CLASS AND CERTIFIED MAIL
CERTIFIED RECEIPT NO. 7018 1130 0002 1245 3385**

Angelita Zayas
51 Second Street
New Haven, CT 06519

Dear Ms. Zayas,

This is to serve you notice that effective the close of business, April 14, 2021 your employment with the City of New Haven Board of Education is terminated. A Loudermill (pre-disciplinary hearing) was originally scheduled via zoom on April 7, 2021 and your union representatives requested additional time to prepare for the Loudermill hearing. As a result, the City agreed to postpone the hearing to April 14, 2021.

In your notice of the Loudermill hearing, you were advised that the purpose of this meeting was to afford you an opportunity to respond to the aforementioned violations. You were further advised that disciplinary action up to and including dismissal was being contemplated for the violations as set forth in the findings of the administrative investigation and the supplemental evidence. You were noticed that should you decline this opportunity to provide new or mitigating information or fail to attend the Loudermill hearing, the City would take appropriate action based on the evidence available to it.

On April 14, 2021, you did not appear for your Loudermill hearing. Your Union representatives reported that you submitted paperwork to retire effective May 1, 2021 and preferred not to respond to the violations as set forth below. The City responded that it would follow up with this report and pointed out that you could not remain on administrative leave with pay absent an agreement. It was also pointed out that the City may proceed after its follow up with the evidence available to it. OLR contacted the Pension Office and it was reported by the Pension Supervisor that although you made an inquiry about retirement early this week, you had not submitted any formal paperwork of an intent to retire from City employment, as was reported by your representatives.

This decision to terminate your employment is based in part upon your failure to appear at the Loudermill hearing scheduled for April 14, 2021 and findings of misconduct as established by the evidence incorporated as part of the administrative investigation and supplemental evidence establishing the violations of work rules, policies, and regulations as set forth below. A copy of the administrative investigation was provided to you and your Union representative(s) in advance of your Loudermill hearing which included the following evidence:

1. Notice of Administrative Leave (10/15/20)
2. Records of entry/exit (9/30/20 to 10/6/20)
3. Surveillance photos/CD (9/30/20)
4. Timesheet 9/8/20 to 9/16/20

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5. Overtime Slips 9/8/20 to 9/16/20
6. Records of entry/exit (9/9/20 to 9/23/20)
7. Records of entry/exit (8/31/20 to 10/15/20)
8. Summer Schedule 2020 by School
9. Timesheet (Angelita Zayas) Extra Duty/Overtime 7/25/20
10. Timesheet (Ron Rosarbo) Extra Duty/Overtime Week of 7/19/20
11. Parking Lot video surveillance (photos and CD)
12. Building permits week of September 7, 2020
13. Overtime Slips 9/8/20 to 9/16/20
14. Building permits week of September 14, 2020
15. Building permits week of September 21, 2020
16. Timesheet Extra Duty/Overtime 9/22/20 to 9/29/20
17. Records of entry/exit (8/31/20 to 10/15/20)
18. Email to Chief Reddish from Officer Joyner
19. Questionnaire to and Responses from Harold Brooks
20. Job Description School Security Worker

In addition to the evidence contained in the aforementioned administrative investigation, a supplemental report was issued to you and your Union representative along with notice that the City was adding violations based upon a social media post you made to a co-worker who is also in a subordinate position to that of a supervisor. The post violated the administrative leave notice directive not to have direct contact with co-workers in your official capacity. This post was also deemed to be offensive, hostile, derogatory and intimidating to your coworker. Because your post related to your co-worker's employment with the City and the fact that you are a supervisor to this Local 884 member, it is considered insubordination and violation of the City's Work Place Violence Policy.

It was also taken into consideration and established as part of the administrative investigation that you are in the position of School Security Worker I. This job description states in pertinent part the following:

This is responsible, investigative public safety work involving the control, maintenance and enforcement of regulations governing the order and security of the City's Public Schools.

Illustrative Examples of Work:

- Patrols and supervises traffic of school corridors, rest rooms, entrances, exits and passage ways.
- Identifies intruders and any other unauthorized persons, and regulates or controls their entry and passage in the public-school buildings.
- Assists authorized visitors by directing and explaining security regulations as necessary.
- Assists and directs student traffic associated with fire alarms, cafeteria use, busing and parking facility access.

- Assists, as directed, during athletic, social and academic activities scheduled in the school building during and after regular school hours.
- Assists, as directed, in controlling and investigating causes of school disturbances and other internal and external problems.
- Assists law enforcement officers as directed.

This position requires of the candidate to “...successfully complete a program in law enforcement training at a police training facility and upon completion be eligible for power of arrest status under Connecticut General Statutes.”

The administrative investigation established that your conduct demonstrates an unwillingness or inability to meet the essential job functions of School Security Worker I. Additionally, you violated the following violations of the School Security Division’s Standard Operating Procedures (October 2014) as follows:

2014-001 Foreword

This manual is intended to provide guidelines for your conduct as an employee of the Security Department at the New Haven School District. It is not intended to prescribe specific conduct in every situation that you are likely to encounter. This guide is no substitute for sound judgment. Security officers of all ranks must use common sense while applying rules to any given situation. In no way shall this guide be construed to supersede the provisions of the New Haven School District or the New Haven Board of Education employee handbook.

Loyalty, courage, integrity and dedication to duty are all qualities expected of the professional security officer. The qualities alone, however, are not sufficient. Professionalism demands that service to the New Haven School District always be paramount in the mind of each officer. Personal feelings must be sublimated in deference to the good of the school district and those you serve.

We represent a public educational institution and as such our primary goal is to render the best possible service to our students, staff and community. Personal appearance, courtesy, attitude, alertness and ability are the keys to success and ultimately to the success of the New Haven School District.

2014-005 Rules and Regulations

- **Reporting to Work:** *All security personnel will report to work promptly for their regularly scheduled work hours (and any extra or special assignment hours).*
- **Post Coverage and Attendance:** *All security personnel are expected to exemplify promptness and good attendance in reporting to work. Excessive tardiness or*

absenteeism will not be tolerated. No security personnel shall leave his/her assignment without permission, and without the proper notification being made to the Security Office, security supervisor and/or building principal.

2014-007 Extra Duty Assignments – Roles and Responsibilities

Procedure

1. *Report on time at the location indicated in the special or extra duty assignment notification (whether verbal or written).*
4. *Be responsible for handling and/or assisting in all incidents and complaints that take place while on duty to include (a) Thefts, damage to property, disputes, lost or missing children.*
7. *Officers shall leave their assignment when authorized by a supervisor or the Director of Security.*

Falsifying/Fraud

In addition to engaging in theft of property from the New Haven Public Schools, you submitted timesheets and extra duty/overtime slips for payment for hours not worked. You misrepresented hours worked during your regular workday, as you habitually and frequently failed to report to work as scheduled without authorization. Additionally, on July 25, 2020 and on four occasions in September 2020, you claimed to have worked the scheduled hours of the extra duty/overtime assignment at Adult Education, where you did not show up at all or worked fewer hours.

Your conduct also violates Section 12 5/8-8 (c) of the City's Code of Ethics which prohibits "...the use of any publicly owned or supported property, vehicle, equipment, material, labor or service that it is the general practice to make available to the public at large, or that is provided as a matter of stated public policy for the use of public officials and municipal employees in the conduct of business." Section 12 5/8-8 I states that the "...prohibited practices are also sufficient for an appropriate authority to impose discipline in accordance with the City Charter, this chapter [Code of Ethics]...and/or any applicable collective bargaining agreement."

Your social media post violated the directives of the administrative leave with pay notice and the City's Work Place Violence Policy.

After consideration of all of the information available to me, it is clear you cannot be entrusted with the formidable authority of the position of security officer. Security Officers are responsible for maintaining the public trust and a feeling of security within the schools they serve. In addition to bringing disrepute upon the Department with the egregiousness of your offenses, your actions could not be more extreme and damaging to public trust. Your continued

employment would send the wholly unacceptable message to the public that it is proper for officers to engage in gross and highly offensive misconduct, including falsifying. You take no responsibility for your actions and therefore are incorrigible, demonstrating an unwillingness to change and meet the requirements of the position of Security Officer. In addition, there is no dispute that the City would be exposed to substantial liability if you were to remain employed with the Department.

The public, including the students, and the City should be spared the dangers and potential liability associated with your further employment. The staff, students and parents are entitled to expect a security department that is beyond reproach in matters of integrity and accountability. Due to the safety-sensitive nature of this work, the City has no choice but to terminate your employment.

Very truly yours,

Thaddeus Reddish

Thaddeus Reddish
Director of Security

Cc: Lisa Mack, Director of HR and Labor Relations, BOE
Cathleen A. Simpson, Director of Labor Relations
Stephen Librandi, Manager of HR & Benefits
Jessica Criscuolo, Payroll Supervisor
Harold Brooks, President Local 3144
Patrick Sampson, AFSCME Staff Representative