

**AGENCY FOR WORKFORCE INNOVATION
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA**

PETITIONER:

Employer Account No. - 2972978
THE COMFORT AGENCY CORP
677 MILAN DR
KISSIMMEE FL 34758-4305

RESPONDENT:

State of Florida
Agency for Workforce Innovation
c/o Department of Revenue

**PROTEST OF LIABILITY
DOCKET NO. 2010-135447L**

ORDER

This matter comes before me for final Agency Order.

Having fully considered the Special Deputy's Recommended Order and the record of the case and in the absence of any exceptions to the Recommended Order, I adopt the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law as set forth therein. A copy of the Recommended Order is attached and incorporated in this Final Order.

In consideration thereof, it is ORDERED that the determination dated July 30, 2010, is REVERSED.

DONE and ORDERED at Tallahassee, Florida, this _____ day of **June, 2011**.



TOM CLENDENNING
Assistant Director
AGENCY FOR WORKFORCE INNOVATION

**AGENCY FOR WORKFORCE INNOVATION
Unemployment Compensation Appeals**

MSC 345 CALDWELL BUILDING
107 EAST MADISON STREET
TALLAHASSEE FL 32399-4143

PETITIONER:

Employer Account No. - 2972978
THE COMFORT AGENCY CORP
ATTN: SHERRINE GEORGE
677 MILAN DR
KISSIMMEE FL 34758-4305

RESPONDENT:

State of Florida
Agency for Workforce Innovation
c/o Department of Revenue

**PROTEST OF LIABILITY
DOCKET NO. 2010-135447L**

RECOMMENDED ORDER OF SPECIAL DEPUTY

TO: Assistant Director
Agency for Workforce Innovation

This matter comes before the undersigned Special Deputy pursuant to the Petitioner's protest of the Respondent's determination dated July 30, 2010.

After due notice to the parties, a telephone hearing was held on March 2, 2011. The Petitioner's owner and a waiver support coordinator appeared and testified on behalf of the Petitioner. A tax auditor II appeared and testified on behalf of the Respondent. The Joined Party did not appear at the hearing.

The record of the case, including the recording of the hearing and any exhibits submitted in evidence, is herewith transmitted. Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law were not received.

Issue:

Whether services performed for the Petitioner by the Joined Party constitute insured employment, and if so, the effective date of liability, pursuant to Section 443.036(19), 443.036(21); 443.1216, Florida Statutes.

Findings of Fact:

1. The Petitioner is a corporation, incorporated in 2009, for the purpose of running a home companion business.
2. The Joined Party provided services for a client as a companion. The client chose to retain the Petitioner's agency for home health support or companion services. The client indicated to the Petitioner that they wished to keep the services of the Joined Party. The Petitioner offered to allow the Joined Party to work under the Petitioner's agency.

3. Home health support providers are required by law to work under contract with the state or with an agency.
4. The Home health support business is heavily regulated by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities.
5. The Joined Party provided services as part of the Petitioner's agency from 2009 through July 2010.
6. The Joined Party and the client worked together to create a schedule of visits.
7. The Petitioner did not direct or monitor the work performed by the Joined Party.
8. The Joined Party's rate of pay was based upon the rates paid by the State of Florida.
9. The Joined Party was responsible for providing any necessary tools or equipment for the work. The Joined Party was responsible for paying for any expenses in conjunction with the work.

Conclusions of Law:

10. The issue in this case, whether services performed for the Petitioner constitute employment subject to the Florida Unemployment Compensation Law, is governed by Chapter 443, Florida Statutes. Section 443.1216(1)(a)2., Florida Statutes, provides that employment subject to the chapter includes service performed by individuals under the usual common law rules applicable in determining an employer-employee relationship.
11. The Supreme Court of the United States held that the term "usual common law rules" is to be used in a generic sense to mean the "standards developed by the courts through the years of adjudication." United States v. W.M. Webb, Inc., 397 U.S. 179 (1970).
12. The Supreme Court of Florida adopted and approved the tests in 1 Restatement of Law, Agency 2d Section 220 (1958), for use to determine if an employment relationship exists. See Cantor v. Cochran, 184 So.2d 173 (Fla. 1966); Miami Herald Publishing Co. v. Kendall, 88 So.2d 276 (Fla. 1956); Magarian v. Southern Fruit Distributors, 1 So.2d 858 (Fla. 1941); see also Kane Furniture Corp. v. R. Miranda, 506 So.2d 1061 (Fla. 2d DCA 1987).
13. Restatement of Law is a publication, prepared under the auspices of the American Law Institute, which explains the meaning of the law with regard to various court rulings. The Restatement sets forth a nonexclusive list of factors that are to be considered when judging whether a relationship is an employment relationship or an independent contractor relationship.
14. 1 Restatement of Law, Agency 2d Section 220 (1958) provides:
 - (1) A servant is a person employed to perform services for another and who, in the performance of the services, is subject to the other's control or right of control.
 - (2) The following matters of fact, among others, are to be considered:
 - (a) the extent of control which, by the agreement, the business may exercise over the details of the work;
 - (b) whether or not the one employed is engaged in a distinct occupation or business;
 - (c) the kind of occupation, with reference to whether, in the locality, the work is usually done under the direction of the employer or by a specialist without supervision;
 - (d) the skill required in the particular occupation;

- (e) whether the employer or the worker supplies the instrumentalities, tools, and the place of work for the person doing the work;
 - (f) the length of time for which the person is employed;
 - (g) the method of payment, whether by the time or by the job;
 - (h) whether or not the work is a part of the regular business of the employer;
 - (i) whether or not the parties believe they are creating the relation of master and servant;
 - (j) whether the principal is or is not in business.
15. Comments in the Restatement explain that the word “servant” does not exclusively connote manual labor, and the word “employee” has largely replaced “servant” in statutes dealing with various aspects of the working relationship between two parties. In Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services v. Department of Labor & Employment Security, 472 So.2d 1284 (Fla. 1st DCA 1985) the court confirmed that the factors listed in the Restatement are the proper factors to be considered in determining whether an employer-employee relationship exists. However, in citing La Grande v. B&L Services, Inc., 432 So.2d 1364, 1366 (Fla. 1st DCA 1983), the court acknowledged that the question of whether a person is properly classified an employee or an independent contractor often cannot be answered by reference to “hard and fast” rules, but rather must be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
16. The evidence presented in this case reveals that the Petitioner did not exercise control over the work of the Joined Party. The evidence presented demonstrates that the only controls exercised over the Joined Party were those required by law. The Petitioner played no direct role in the relationship between the client and the Joined Party. The Petitioner’s only role was to provide an agency for the Joined Party to work under as required by law.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the determination dated July 30, 2010, be REVERSED.

Respectfully submitted on April 20, 2011.



KRIS LONKANI, Special Deputy
Office of Appeals