

**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
Unemployment Compensation Appeals
THE CALDWELL BUILDING
107 EAST MADISON STREET
TALLAHASSEE FL 32399-4143**

PETITIONER:

Employer Account No. - 2798350
PORTER LEATHER LLC
ATTN: MARGARET PORTER
7122 WEDGEWOOD DRIVE
NEW PORT RICHEY FL 34652-6792

RESPONDENT:

State of Florida
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITY
c/o Department of Revenue

**PROTEST OF LIABILITY
DOCKET NO. 2011-150622L**

ORDER

This matter comes before me for final Department 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 October 26, 2011, is REVERSED.

JUDICIAL REVIEW

Any request for judicial review must be initiated within 30 days of the date the Order was filed. Judicial review is commenced by filing one copy of a *Notice of Appeal* with the DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY at the address shown at the top of this Order and a second copy, with filing fees prescribed by law, with the appropriate District Court of Appeal. It is the responsibility of the party appealing to the Court to prepare a transcript of the record. If no court reporter was at the hearing, the transcript must be prepared from a copy of the Special Deputy's hearing recording, which may be requested from the Office of Appeals.

Cualquier solicitud para revisión judicial debe ser iniciada dentro de los 30 días a partir de la fecha en que la Orden fue registrada. La revisión judicial se comienza al registrar una copia de un *Aviso de Apelación* con la Agencia para la Innovación de la Fuerza Laboral [*DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY*] en la dirección que aparece en la parte superior de este *Orden* y una segunda copia, con los honorarios de registro prescritos por la ley, con el Tribunal Distrital de Apelaciones pertinente. Es la responsabilidad de la parte apelando al tribunal la de preparar una transcripción del registro. Si en la audiencia no se encontraba ningún estenógrafo registrado en los tribunales, la transcripción debe ser preparada de una copia de la grabación de la audiencia del Delegado Especial [*Special Deputy*], la cual puede ser solicitada de la Oficina de Apelaciones.

Nenpòt demann pou yon revizyon jiridik fèt pou l kòmanse lan yon peryòd 30 jou apati de dat ke Lòd la te depoze a. Revizyon jiridik la kòmanse avèk depo yon kopi yon *Avi Dapèl* ki voye bay DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY lan nan adrès ki parèt pi wo a, lan tèt Lòd sa a e yon dezyèm kopi, avèk frè depo ki preskri pa lalwa, bay Kou Dapèl Distrik apwopriye a. Se responsabilite pati k ap prezante apèl la bay Tribinal la pou l prepare yon kopi dosye a. Si pa te gen yon stenograf lan seyans lan, kopi a fèt pou l prepare apati de kopi anrejistreman seyans lan ke Adjwen Spesyal la te fè a, e ke w ka mande Biwo Dapèl la voye pou ou.

DONE and ORDERED at Tallahassee, Florida, this _____ day of **June, 2012**.



Altemese Smith,
Assistant Director,
Unemployment Compensation Services
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

FILED ON THIS DATE PURSUANT TO § 120.52,
FLORIDA STATUTES, WITH THE DESIGNATED
DEPARTMENT CLERK, RECEIPT OF WHICH IS
HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGED.

Shanendra Barnes

DEPUTY CLERK

DATE

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that true and correct copies of the foregoing Final Order have been furnished to the persons listed below in the manner described, on the _____ day of June, 2012.

Shanendra Barnes

SHANEDRA Y. BARNES, Special Deputy Clerk
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITY
Unemployment Compensation Appeals
107 EAST MADISON STREET
TALLAHASSEE FL 32399-4143

By U.S. Mail:

PORTER LEATHER LLC
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MATTHEW F VAN WOWK
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DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
ATTN: VANDA RAGANS - CCOC #1 4624
5050 WEST TENNESSEE STREET
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DOR BLOCKED CLAIMS UNIT
ATTENTION MYRA TAYLOR
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TALLAHASSEE FL 32314-6417

State of Florida
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
c/o Department of Revenue

**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
Unemployment Compensation Appeals**

MSC 344 CALDWELL BUILDING
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**PROTEST OF LIABILITY
DOCKET NO. 2011-150622L**

RECOMMENDED ORDER OF SPECIAL DEPUTY

TO: Assistant Director,
Interim Executive Director,
Unemployment Compensation Services
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

This matter comes before the undersigned Special Deputy pursuant to the Petitioner’s protest of the Respondent’s determination dated October 26, 2011.

After due notice to the parties, a telephone hearing was held on April 16, 2012. The Petitioner, represented by a co-owner, appeared and testified. Another co-owner testified as a witness. The Respondent, represented by a Department of Revenue Tax Specialist II, appeared and testified.

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 as a helper 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 Florida limited liability company which was formed in December 2005 to operate a business that manufactures small leather products such as luggage tags, key rings, and bookmarks. The Petitioner is owned by Larry and Margaret Porter, a husband and wife who operated the business as a sole proprietorship for many years prior to December 2005. The Petitioner closed the business on June 30, 2011.

2. Mary Porter, the daughter of Larry and Margaret Porter, worked at the business as a production worker. In 2010 the Petitioner was moving the business and needed help with the move. The Petitioner engaged their daughter's boyfriend, Matthew Van Wowk, the Joined Party in this case, to help Larry Porter with the move. In addition to helping with the move the Joined Party mowed the lawn at the home of Larry and Margaret Porter and helped Larry Porter build shelves in the home.
3. The Joined Party was not allowed to work in the production of the leather products. Mary Porter was informed that the Joined Party was not allowed to be in the assembly area of the business.
4. Periodically, Mary Porter would approach her mother and would give her mother a piece of paper with a dollar amount written on the paper. She would explain to her mother that the amount written on the paper was the amount that the Joined Party wanted to be paid for the work which he had performed. Margaret Porter would then write a check to the Joined Party from the Petitioner's business checking account. No taxes were withheld from the pay. The total amount paid to the Joined Party was \$3,044.11 and at the end of 2010 the Petitioner reported the Joined Party's earnings on Form 1099-MISC as nonemployee compensation.
5. The Joined Party last performed work for the Petitioner and the Petitioner's owners on or about October 15, 2010. No more work was available for the Joined Party after that date.

Conclusions of Law:

6. The issue in this case, whether services performed for the Petitioner by the Joined Party as a helper to the co-owner 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.
7. 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).
8. 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). In Brayshaw v. Agency for Workforce Innovation, et al; 58 So.3d 301 (Fla. 1st DCA 2011) the court stated that the statute does not refer to other rules or factors for determining the employment relationship and, therefore, the Department is limited to applying only Florida common law in determining the nature of an employment relationship.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
 12. 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 can not be answered by reference to “hard and fast” rules, but rather must be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
 13. The Petitioner's business was the manufacture of small leather products. The Joined Party was not involved in the manufacturing process and was not even allowed to be in the assembly room. The Joined Party was hired to assist the owners of the business with a specific task, the relocation of the business. Although the Joined Party performed other tasks at the personal residence of the owners, those tasks were not related to the Petitioner's business. The work performed by the Joined Party was separate and distinct from the Petitioner's business.
 14. There was no agreement concerning the method or the rate of pay. After the Joined Party completed some work he would communicate with the owner through the owner's daughter concerning the amount he wanted to be paid for the work performed. These facts reveal that the Joined Party controlled the financial aspects of the relationship. Although the Petitioner reported the Joined Party's total earnings as a business expense, at least a portion of the earnings were not related to the business.
 15. It is concluded that the services performed by the Joined Party as a helper do not constitute insured employment.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the determination dated October 26, 2011, be REVERSED.

Respectfully submitted on April 23, 2012.

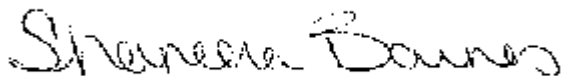


R. O. SMITH, Special Deputy
Office of Appeals

A party aggrieved by the *Recommended Order* may file written exceptions to the Director at the address shown above within fifteen days of the mailing date of the *Recommended Order*. Any opposing party may file counter exceptions within ten days of the mailing of the original exceptions. A brief in opposition to counter exceptions may be filed within ten days of the mailing of the counter exceptions. Any party initiating such correspondence must send a copy of the correspondence to each party of record and indicate that copies were sent.

Una parte que se vea perjudicada por la *Orden Recomendada* puede registrar excepciones por escrito al Director Designado en la dirección que aparece arriba dentro de quince días a partir de la fecha del envío por correo de la *Orden Recomendada*. Cualquier contraparte puede registrar contra-excepciones dentro de los diez días a partir de la fecha de envío por correo de las excepciones originales. Un sumario en oposición a contra-excepciones puede ser registrado dentro de los diez días a partir de la fecha de envío por correo de las contra-excepciones. Cualquier parte que dé inicio a tal correspondencia debe enviarle una copia de tal correspondencia a cada parte contenida en el registro y señalar que copias fueron remitidas.

Yon pati ke *Lòd Rekòmande* a afekte ka prezante de eksklizyon alekri bay Direktè Adjwen an lan adrès ki parèt anlè a lan yon peryòd ken z jou apati de dat ke *Lòd Rekòmande* a te poste a. Nenpòt pati ki fè opozisyon ka prezante objeksyon a eksklizyon yo lan yon peryòd dis jou apati de lè ke objeksyon a eksklizyon orijinal yo te poste. Yon dosye ki prezante ann opozisyon a objeksyon a eksklizyon yo, ka prezante lan yon peryòd dis jou apati de dat ke objeksyon a eksklizyon yo te poste. Nenpòt pati ki angaje yon korespondans konsa dwe voye yon kopi kourye a bay chak pati ki enplike lan dosye a e endike ke yo te voye kopi yo.



SHANEDRA Y. BARNES, Special Deputy Clerk

Date Mailed:
April 23, 2012

Copies mailed to:

Petitioner
Respondent
Joined Party

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7235 DIANNE DRIVE
NEW PORT RICHEY FL 34652

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