

Questions for the State Board of Labor Relations Nominee

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State Board of Labor Relations ([CGS § 31-102](#))

The State Board of Labor Relations consists of three members appointed by the governor and confirmed by both chambers of the General Assembly. They serve six-year terms. The board interprets and administers four collective bargaining laws: (1) the Municipal Employee Relations Act (for municipal employees), (2) the State Employee Relations Act (for state employees), (3) the Teacher Negotiation Act (for public school teachers), and (4) the State Labor Relations Act (for private sector employees who are not covered by the federal National Labor Relations Act). It can investigate complaints and grievances, hold hearings, and issue decisions. It can also promulgate regulations, decide the scope of bargaining issues, and issue declaratory rulings.

The board appoints staff, including legal counsel and an agent. The board's legal counsel represents it in court, investigates legal questions, aids in the preparation of decisions, and represents the State Board of Mediation and Arbitration in all matters involving collective bargaining rights of state employees. The board's agent represents it and investigates any complaints referred by the board ([CGS § 31-103](#)).

Questions

1. What knowledge and experience do you have with either public or private sector collective bargaining laws? How will that knowledge and experience help you on the board?
2. In your experience with the board, what decisions by the board stand out as being particularly significant? In your opinion, what might make a case particularly difficult to decide?

3. How common is it for the board's decisions to be overturned after an appeal to the courts? Are there any decisions involving the board that you feel should be addressed legislatively?
4. In your experience dealing with the State Employee Relations Act, have you found any recurring issues or violations by either labor or management? What types of unfair labor practices most commonly come before the board?
5. Given the board's limited jurisdiction over private-sector collective bargaining, how often does the board have to adjudicate a private-sector labor dispute? What types of private-sector issues does the board hear?
6. How does the board respond to public requests for information? Is a knowledgeable individual available for the public to speak with during business hours?
7. Legislators often hear that the collective bargaining process under the Municipal Employee Relations Act is too slow. Have you found this to be true? Are there any administrative or legislative remedies that you would recommend? What are the pros and cons of adopting a strict negotiating timeline similar to the one in the Teacher Negotiation Act?
8. The board is responsible for determining the certified bargaining agent for a designated bargaining unit of employees. What factors do you consider when making this determination? Under what grounds can part of a bargaining unit break off to form an independent unit or join another union? What factors does the board consider when it is determining whether employees are "managers" who do not have collective bargaining rights.
9. How would you assess the board's current case load? Does it have adequate resources to process and decide the cases before it in a timely manner?

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