

FILED  
SUPREME COURT  
STATE OF WASHINGTON  
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BY SUSAN L. CARLSON  
CLERK

No. 98633-9

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

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UNEMPLOYMENT LAW PROJECT, et al.

Petitioners,

v.

SUZAN LEVINE, COMMISSIONER FOR THE WASHINGTON STATE EMPLOYMENT  
SECURITY DEPARTMENT,

Respondent.

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DECLARATION OF MARISSA RIEGERT

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THE SHERIDAN LAW FIRM, P.S.

John P. Sheridan, WSBA #21473  
Mark W. Rose, WSBA #41916  
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Seattle, WA 98104  
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Attorneys for Petitioners

I, Marissa Riegert, declare that the following statement is true and correct:

1. I am over the age of eighteen (18) and competent to make this declaration.
2. I am a resident of Edmonds in Snohomish County, WA.
3. I worked at REI for five years as a Retail Sales Manager.
4. I became unemployed on April 15, 2020.
5. I applied for unemployment benefits on about April 16, 2020.
6. I received a Monetary Determination on April 22, 2020, entitling me to benefits.
7. The Employment Security Department (ESD) told me on April 29, 2020 that my weekly check is being withheld, because my case was put into adjudication.
8. I have called ESD thousands of times and up to 500 times in one day in an effort to resolve the issue with my claim. In general, my daily routine was to check my SAW account and the ESD website to try and get more information about my claim, and then I would spend the rest of the day trying to call and speak with an agent at ESD. I was told by ESD that the adjudication process would work itself out and that

somebody would take a look at the issue. As it got nearer to the beginning of June and bills were going to be due, I increased the effort I was using to resolve the issue with my claim. Around then an agent with ESD told me that my employer did not respond to a letter that ESD sent them. I contacted my employer who said that they had never received the letter. Another agent at ESD told me that the only way to have a new letter sent to the employer was to get in contact with a tier three agent. I spent entire days calling the ESD in order to get in contact with a tier three agent and hopefully resolve my claim, but any time I was transferred to a tier three agent my call disconnected.

9. I have been significantly and adversely affected in the following ways due to my not receiving my unemployment benefits: Luckily, my husband was able to keep his job, so we have been able to afford our necessities. However, going through this process has been incredibly taxing psychologically. I have spent months trying to resolve the issue, but there have been constant roadblocks, and everything I have tried leads nowhere. I have had to treat going through this process like it was a full-time job, and months later I have nothing to show for it. This process has been appalling and inhumane. One of our biggest stressors is childcare. We chose not to remove our daughter from the childcare arrangement that we had made despite the cost. We have become deeply

attached to our childcare provider, and we do not want to change that situation.

10. This process has been so long, arduous, and uncertain. I have received very little information or direction from ESD, and I have no way of knowing how my claim is doing or when the issue will be resolved. It seems so much like the whole application process comes down to luck, because I have friends and coworkers who are in similar situations who have been getting benefit payments, but I haven't been. I feel as though I am having to go through all of this when I haven't done anything wrong. I didn't want to lose my job, I didn't quit, and I didn't get fired, but I am still having all of these issues. It feels as though there is nothing I can do that will resolve this.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

DATED this 15th day of June, 2020 in Edmonds, Washington.

/s/ Marissa Riegert  
Marissa Riegert

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I, Tony Dondero, certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington and the United States that, on June 23, 2020, I served the document to which this Certificate is attached to the party listed below in the manner shown.

ROBERT FERGUSON  
Attorney General

Eric D. Peterson, WSBA #35555  
Senior Assistant Attorney General

Leah E. Harris, WSBA #40815  
Assistant Attorney General

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- By United States Mail
- By Legal Messenger
- By Facsimile
- By Overnight Fed Ex Delivery
- By Electronic Mail

Dated this 23rd day of June 2020.

*s/Tony Dondero* \_\_\_\_\_  
Tony Dondero,  
Legal Assistant

**THE SHERIDAN LAW FIRM, P.S.**

**June 23, 2020 - 2:23 PM**

**Transmittal Information**

**Filed with Court:** Supreme Court  
**Appellate Court Case Number:** 98633-9  
**Appellate Court Case Title:** Unemployment Law Project et al. v. Suzan Levine

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