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/ Attorney General Platkin, Labor Commissioner Asaro-Angelo Obtain Nearly \$300,000 in Back Pay and Penalties for Misclassified Newspaper Delivery Workers

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 18, 2024

TRENTON – Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin and New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo today jointly announced [a nearly \\$300,000 settlement](#) with a newspaper delivery firm that misclassified workers as independent contractors rather than as employees.

The company, NJ Penn Logistics, LLC, is a wholesale distributor of newspapers and magazines. NJDOL began investigating NJ Penn in 2021, and as a result of that investigation, determined that between 2018 and 2022 NJ Penn misclassified at least 105 newspaper delivery, warehouse, and other workers as independent contractors instead of employees, in violation of New Jersey law.

“Companies that willingly erode the employment relationship make all of society worse off, at the expense of workers’ wages, benefits, and well-being,” **said Attorney General Platkin**. “My office, working in conjunction with Labor Commissioner Asaro-Angelo, refuses to tolerate this behavior. We will continue to investigate companies that violate our labor laws and regulations and hold them accountable.”

“When businesses violate New Jersey’s labor law, they exploit workers and deny them of their right to fair pay and benefits,” **said Labor Commissioner Asaro-Angelo**. “Our unprecedented collaborations with the Office of Attorney General continue to crack down on worker misclassification and protect workers’ rights and benefits. This not only boosts our workforce but maintains a level playing field for our businesses to compete and thrive.”

The settlement resolves allegations that NJ Penn violated various State labor laws, including by:

- Failing to pay wages due to employees;
- Withholding or diverting employee wages;
- Failing to maintain and provide records;
- Illegally requesting job applicants’ criminal history;
- Failing to provide employees earned sick leave; and
- Hindering the NJDOL in its investigation.

Of the total \$296,188.52 agreed to in the settlement, \$182,188.52 is payable to eligible workers no later than February 1, 2025. NJDOL shall receive an additional \$114,000 to satisfy alleged penalties, administrative fees, and costs.

In addition, NJ Penn agrees to classify all current and future workers as employees under all applicable State labor and employment laws, including, but not limited to, the New Jersey Unemployment Compensation Law and the Temporary Disability Benefits Law.

The State will monitor compliance with the agreement for two years. Failing to comply with the terms of the agreement could result in an additional immediate penalty of up to \$557,882.

NJDOL is represented by the Office of the Attorney General’s Division of Law by Deputy Attorney General Nadya A. Comas, under the supervision of Labor Enforcement Section Chief

Eve E. Weissman and Assistant Attorney General Mayur P. Saxena.

Learn more about the illegal practice of employee misclassification [here](#). Businesses can learn about legal requirements and services provided to them at: nj.gov/labor. For more information on worker benefits and protections, visit myworkrights.nj.gov.

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