

OK to Discipline Worker for Disobeying No-Jewelry Safety Policy



CP set off a firestorm by suspending a 30-year postal worker for 5 shifts because she refused to remove her engagement ring as required by the workplace safety policy. The union filed 2 grievances, both of which the federal arbitrator board rejected. The union's first claim that forcing the worker to remove a ring after it was blessed by a priest at her wedding was religious discrimination was a bit of a long shot. But the main claim about the suspensions being unfair and unreasonable was a closer call. After hearing from 4 witnesses, the arbitrator sided with CP finding that a ban on wearing rings and other jewelry that could get entangled in the machinery was a reasonable and necessary safety policy and that it was consistently enforced [*Canada Post Corporation v Canadian Union of Postal Workers*, 2020 CanLII 86105 (CA LA), November 2, 2020].