

WORKER O VS SCM GARMENTS

OVERVIEW:

For case -15, the worker has been represented as 'Worker O'. She worked as Checker in the respective company for 4 years. Then she wanted to relieve herself from the job. In the covid-19 pandemic period, she suffered from economic downfall. So she applied to claim her PF amount, but it failed. When she enquired, it was found that the company had wrongly entered her bank account number in her PF portal. So she approached the company to change it correctly. But the company refused her request and did not respond to her. So she wrote a petition to the PF department and then her query was resolved.

BASIC INFORMATION:

1. Name of the Worker: Worker O
2. Gender of the Worker: Female
3. Age of the Worker (at the time of IDI): 40
4. Name of the Company: SCM Garments - 57. VOC Nagar (South), Valayangudi, Tirupur
5. Designation of the Worker: Checker
6. Years of work in the Company: 4 years
7. Dispute Type: PF unsettled
8. Year of Dispute onset: 2019
9. Concluded/Ongoing: Conciliated
10. Year of Conclusion (If applicable): 2020
11. Individual/ Collective: Individual

TIMELINE OF EVENTS:

DATE	EVENT
2016	Worker O Joined SCM Garments
May 2020	Due to lock covid situation Worker O relieve duties
Sep 2020	Rejoined
Dec 2020	Request made for PF withdrawal
24 th Dec 2020	NGO staff intervened her case

30 th Dec 2020	Petition sent to District Collector
5 th Jan 2021	Call letter from PF office received
12 th Feb 2021	PF settlement availed

CASE HISTORY:

a. About the worker

Worker O has lived near Gobichettipalayam of Erode District for the past 30 years. After her marriage she started to work in the agriculture fields near the village and earn daily wages to support her husband who goes as a coolie and earns daily wages. He does not have a regular job. Sometimes for a month he is idle without a job. This was nature and hence Worker O started working to balance the daily survival. They have a daughter who recently has completed 12th standard and joined a Physiotherapy course. With a small savings they have and through scholarship they were able to pay the course fee. Her dream is to start a Physiotherapy Clinic in her home village and to serve her village. Actually her dream was to become a Doctor since her 12th standard mark scoring could not meet the requirement she joined the Physiotherapy Course. Being a day scholar she accesses the Institute on a daily basis. But now due to Covid situation she attends online classes and supports household chores. In the due course of time, one of the village acquainted persons who works in SCM Unit in Sathy conveyed Worker O to join her. Since the field works are not regular and the financial need of the family on the other side increases, understanding the financial commitments, Worker O joined SCM Garments unit at Sathyamangalam during 2016. She was put in company shifts as Checker and earned Rs.140/- per day wages at the beginning. 30 Rs per day were deducted for PF savings and ESI card benefit given.

b. About the Company

SCM Garments, 57. VOC Nagar (South), Valayangudi, Tirupur has got various units in and around Tirupur. This company produces inner wears and Children wears. Overall there are almost 750 workers employed in various units and sections. Most of the buyers are from the north east. Before 30 years, there were only 8 lines while Worker O joined the company. But recently this unit has got 30 lines which reveal that they have good business.

She was put in company shifts as Checker and earned Rs.140/- per day wages at the beginning. 30 Rs per day were deducted for PF savings and ESI card benefit given. The company was in later days shifted to Tirupur from Sathyamangalam. Supervisor and other management staff were good enough in the way they handled the workers except the forceful words they used and rebuked the workers. Caste base discrimination which is prevalent among the society exists inside the company too. There are also migrant workers in the mill

who stay around the village settlement area and access work here. Leave deduction is made by the company.

c. Beginning of the Conflict

During April 2020 Covid pandemic time, Worker O decided to relive job considering her health condition and fear of Covid infection if any. Even though there is a great financial commitment, considering her health condition and the threat, she resigned. Again she started working in farms and could earn daily wages but it was not sufficient, the family managed it. Actually she was getting Rs.140 as daily wages while she joined the company at first and was getting Rs.230/- when she resigned her job. She was with the company shift by the time. She had struggled economically in the lockdown time and tried to use her PF savings. But she was unable to get her PF due to some error. With the correction request she approached the company management but she was made to wander around for a few months to give proper reply on what must be done to withdraw the Pf amount.

d. Informal resolution process

By the time NGO READ staff intervened in this case and comprehended what had happened. Since there was no proper reply from the company management, they refused to give UAN number, and again through perseverance they could get the UAN number of the worker. With which they try to withdraw the PF amount. Unfortunately the account number mismatched with the PF account records. When they approached the company management and enquired on this they came to know that the company has given another bank account and not the workers account number.

e. Formal resolution – Conciliation

Since there is no other way, they planned to send a petition to the District PF Office and did so. Within 25 days' time duration she got a reply from PF office Erode as a call letter for grievance redressal. . With the NGO staff the worker reached the PF office and who in turn made a call to the company management and was scolded for giving another account number instead of the workers bank account number. This endeavor was for almost seven months and the worker spent nearly five thousand towards travel documentation purposes. At last, the worker could withdraw Rs.27000/- as PF amount withdrawal.

f. Workers' view on the case process:

_____As it is prevalent, workers' ignorance is the loophole for the company management to exploit. This is the responsibility of workers to know what is what; on need based workers should raise questions so that the company may fairly treat.

After the pandemic situation was moderately normal, Worker O approached the SCM management and requested them to allow her to continue working. After a long struggle, she was allowed to rejoin the company. Now after she rejoined there she works in contract shift and earns Rs.400/- per day wages. She works between 8.30 am to 7.30 pm per day. Sometimes she was asked to work the night shift but for a day shift and a

night shift followed in the same day she could only get a one and half day salary. That means for night shift she is paid only half of the salary in such a way the company exploited. But with the intention to support the family, she is adapting to the pressured working environment.

g. Available documents:

_____ID card, Complaint letter sent to PF office, Complaint acknowledgement letter from PF office, Pay Slip, Bank Account Pass Book, PF claim status

h. Missing Documents:

_____None of the documents are missing