

Meyerson to take over as S.O.S. director Aug. 18

Elaine Kehlson Meyerson, the former associate director of the Association for the Advancement of the Mentally Handicapped in Elizabeth, has been named executive director of Shelter Our Sisters (SOS), a county-wide program which aids battered women and their children.

Ms. Meyerson will assume the post Aug. 18, replacing the Teaneck-based shelters' embattled former director, Sandra Ramos, who was ousted from the \$27,000 a year job by the SOS board of directors in January.

The board moved in June to hire Ms. Meyerson after reviewing four applications for the newly reclassified post.

Since terminating Ms. Ramos, the board has combined the office of executive director with the program coordinator's job. Ms. Meyerson will be paid \$35,000 annually, according to board member Elizabeth Antinori.

The new director holds a master's degree in social work from the State University of New York at Buffalo and is a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers. In her former position, she supervised a \$3 million budget and managed a staff of 100.

She also was responsible for the oversight of vocational training, independent housing and living skills as well as

recreational activities.

Ms. Meyerson was on vacation at press time and could not be reached for comment. But in a release issued by the SOS board of trustees, she said her first priority would be to emphasize the shelter's second stage housing program.

Job in dispute

But the length of the new director's tenure is questionable due to pending litigation in state Superior Court against the SOS board. Ms. Ramos is suing to be reinstated to the post and has filed a libel and slander suit against her former

employers for making public the reasons for her termination.

According to numerous board sources, Ms. Meyerson was aware of the pending legal action before applying for the job and was informed by the board that subsequent decisions may void her appointment.

Ms. Ramos contends that the board violated a pledge of confidentiality when it informed the state Office of Labor and Industry of the reasons behind her termination. The agency administers the \$214 in unemployment benefits which Ms.

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which Ms. Ramos receives weekly.

The board fired Ms. Ramos after accusing her of engaging in acts of sexual misconduct, mismanagement, insubordination and subordination (in law, the act of instructing a witness to give false testimony) and

improper supervision.

Ms. Ramos has steadfastly maintained her innocence and claims she was never notified of any of the allegations in performance evaluations she underwent prior to her firing.

A pre-trial conference on her suit will be held Aug. 22 before Judge Sherwin D. Lester, who will hear the

civil case, according to Ms. Ramos' lawyer, Hackensack attorney Frank Luciana.

Meanwhile, the board is challenging the award of Ms. Ramos' unemployment benefits in a battle which is likely to drag on past the 26-week duration of her compensation. Additional hearings have yet to be scheduled, according to attorney Patrick J. Kiernan, a Lu-

cliana associate.

Unemployment officials are concerned that testimony on behalf of Ms. Ramos supporting her case

for receiving benefits may well constitute the actual civil case pending before Lester, Kiernan said. "They're kind of hyper set down there because they know it's a big case," Kiernan added, noting that new hearing dates have been set.

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