

# Judge issues temporary restraining order on Nassau police Superior Officers Association deal




Nassau activists say the county should hold off on approving police contracts until it settles on a comprehensive police reform plan  
Credit: Barry Sloan

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A Nassau judge issued a temporary restraining order Thursday barring implementation of a police labor agreement — approved by the county legislature last month — in response to a lawsuit that said lawmakers wrongly voted for the contract on an emergency basis.

State Supreme Court Justice James McCormack issued the order two days after Nassau resident Doris Sharpe filed a lawsuit that said the legislature's approval of an 8½-year contract

with the Nassau Superior Officers Association was illegal because lawmakers gave it the green light outside of the normal legislative process. The lawsuit says that the emergency approval of the collective bargaining agreement didn't afford the public a chance to comment.

Nassau Interim Finance Authority directors on Thursday approved the labor agreement in a 5-0 vote. "We think it conforms to the pattern that was originally set, and we think it's a fair contract for the county and for the Superior Officers," NIFA chairman Adam Barsky said in an interview.

SOA president Ricky Frassetto declined to comment. A spokeswoman for Nassau County Executive Laura Curran declined to comment, saying the county does not discuss pending litigation.

"The judge's issuance of the TRO is warranted in light of multiple levels of inappropriate actions conducted on an emergency basis by legislators," said Sharpe's attorney, civil rights lawyer Frederick Brewington.

Brewington and Nassau activists say the county should hold off on approving police contracts until it settles on a comprehensive police reform plan, as required under a June directive from Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo. The directive requires municipalities with police departments to develop plans to reform and reinvent law enforcement by April 1, following this May's death of George Floyd while in Minneapolis police custody.

Brewington said Nassau officials have ignored input from activists and residents about reinventing policing.

"The voices of the citizens of Nassau County need to be heard," Brewington said.

The suit names as defendants Curran, a Democrat, and 16 of 19 county legislators who voted to approve the contract, including 11 Republicans and five Democrats. Also named are Barsky, NIFA board members and Nassau's clerk of the Legislature, Michael Pulitzer.

Brewington said McCormack declined to apply the TRO to NIFA because the authority is not involved in the implementation of the contract.

Addressing the lawsuit, Barsky said: "We were victorious in the aspect of the lawsuit that had to do with NIFA and that does not impact our ability to consider the contract."