

GLORIA ARTIAGA, PETITIONER, VS. SILIMAN UNIVERSITY AND SILIMAN UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER/SILIMAN UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER FOUNDATION, INC., RESPONDENTS.

G.R. NO. 178453. April 16, 2009

Ponente: CARPIO MORALES, J.

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/g-r-no-178453/>

CARPIO MORALES, J.:

Respondent Siliman University Medical Center (SUMC) hired Gloria Artiaga (petitioner) in June 1978.

On September 13, 1998, petitioner, then Credit and Collection Officer, resigned from SUMC by letter of even date reading:

I am writing this letter of explanation with a broken spirit and in distress[ed] heart as if myself broken to pieces and I asked God to be my refuge in this time of tribulation. I am not this bad as you and others may think of me. I pray to Him to listen [to] my prayers to let me stand again. The people in the whole community condemned me.

I committed errors and mistakes in the posting of ledger cards as seen on the cards but I could not be certain how I could do this. I can't think anymore. Maybe some of [these] are temporary receipts. As to insurance payments as questioned by the auditors, all cheques coming from insurance company which are payable to SUMC are receipted and later posted to individual ledgers for in patient but for outpatient the Statement of Account is discounted once it is paid.

Sir, I am very sorry that this trouble happened and I am now struggling. I am just crushed and I don't want to move anymore. Please forgive my mistakes. Please give me a chance to stand again.

I have endorsed my responsibility to the one who is taking over my work and I have oriented her of all she is supposed to do except those jobs like appearing [in] court for your legal cases related to patient account. Sir, please consider this letter a resignation letter because I could [not] think of something that could make me stand again and I have already asked the Lord for this decision.[1] (Emphasis and underscoring supplied)

After petitioner submitted the above-quoted letter, the operation of SUMC was transferred from SU to petitioner Siliman University Medical Foundation, Inc. (the Foundation).

More than three years after petitioner resigned or on November 6, 2001, she filed a Complaint[2] for constructive dismissal against SU, SUMC and the Foundation.

In her Position Paper,[3] petitioner claimed that in the last week of August 1998, she was suddenly instructed to indorse all her responsibilities and/or papers to a new employee, one Mrs. Catacutan, and to give the latter an orientation about her duties within two weeks; that she was given no new assignment and when she asked for the instructions, no explanation was given except that a mention was made about some discrepancy in the posting of entries in four patients' ledgers; that she asked to be allowed to dig up files of patients' ledgers, official receipts, and charge slips to explain her side, but to no avail; that eventually, Mrs. Catacutan was designated to take her

place as Credit and Collection Officer; and that after two weeks, as she was extremely humiliated and sensed that her continued employment without any new assignment would humiliate her further, she tendered her resignation on September 13, 1998.

In their Position Paper,[4] respondents gave their side as follows: In September 1998, an audit report found irregularities in the transactions under petitioner's control and supervision. Thus, petitioner was found to have posted official receipts and payments in the individual patient accounts receivable ledger cards but issued official receipts for lower amounts and misappropriated the difference. And she used fictitious receipts in posting payments in the patients' ledger cards and kept the actual payments.[5] Petitioner misappropriated a total of P300,000.

SUMC thus wrote petitioner on September 11, 1998 requiring her to explain in writing, within five days, why no disciplinary action should be taken against her,[6] and she was preventively suspended for 30 days and requested to turn over all monies, files, and records within her control.

Complying, petitioner, by the above-quoted Sept. 13, 1998, gave her explanation and at the same time tendered her resignation which was accepted.[7]

By Decision[8] of November 29, 2002, Labor Arbiter Geoffrey P. Villahermosa dismissed the complaint for lack of legal and factual basis.

On appeal, the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) set aside the Labor Arbiter's Decision, it finding that petitioner was constructively dismissed. It thus ordered respondents to reinstate petitioner and pay her full backwages from September 13, 1998 up to the time of her actual reinstatement.[9] Respondents' Motion for Reconsideration[10] having been denied,[11] they filed a Petition for Certiorari[12] before the Court of Appeals.

By Decision[13] of May 30, 2006, the Court of Appeals reversed the NLRC decision and reinstated the Labor Arbiter's decision, prompting petitioner to file the present petition.[14]

Petitioner faults the Court of Appeals in reevaluating the NLRC's findings of fact for, so she contends, a petition for certiorari is limited to issues of want or excess of jurisdiction, and grave abuse of discretion does not include an inquiry as to the correctness of the evaluation of evidence.[15]

The Court is not impressed.

While review of NLRC decisions via Certiorari should be confined to issues of want of jurisdiction and grave abuse of discretion,[16] grave abuse of discretion is committed when the board, tribunal or officer exercising judicial function fails to consider evidence adduced by the parties,[17] as did the NLRC in the present case. Moreover, where a party's contention appears to be clearly tenable, or where the broader interest of justice and public policy so require, the error may be corrected in a certiorari proceeding,[18] as again in the present case.

In reversing the Labor Arbiter's decision, the NLRC upheld petitioner's version and found her to have been constructively dismissed. Petitioner presented no evidence to substantiate her claim, however.[19]

On the other hand, SUMC's evidence of petitioner's irregular acts is documented. And it sent petitioner a Notice of September 11, 1998 requiring her to explain her side and placing her under preventive suspension. Petitioner's above-quoted letter-explanation cum resignation is self-explanatory.

Against the documentary evidence of respondents, petitioner's claim thus fails.

Petitioner's claim that respondents' pieces of evidence were fabricated, viz,

Firstly, these documents [Notice of Preventive Suspension and Audit Report] were neither served [to] nor

received by complainant. None of the documents even bear a signature identical to that written in her resignation letter. The signatures in Annexes ["2"] [Notice of Preventive Suspension] and ["3"] [September 11, 1998 Audit Report] are not even identical to each other. As claimed by respondents these two documents were supposedly received by complainant on September 11, 1998 or before her resignation. Strangely, the signature appearing on the left bottom of Annex ["3"] was dated 9/14/98 2:00PM while the recipient's signature in Annex ["2"] has no date at all. Why [this] variance if the documents were actually given to complainant on the same day, September 11, 1998?[20] (Underscoring supplied)

does not persuade. Petitioner's earlier-quoted explanation-resignation letter of September 13, 1998 unquestionably shows that she received the notices referred to, otherwise, to what matters she was explaining therein?

In fine, the Court of Appeals did not err in overturning the findings of the NLRC.

WHEREFORE, the petition is DENIED. The Decision of the Court of Appeals dated May 30, 2006 is AFFIRMED.

SO ORDERED.

Quisumbing, (Chairperson), Tinga, Velasco, Jr., and Brion, JJ., concur.

[1] NLRC records, pp. 79-80.

[2] Id. at 1.

[3] Id. at 71-78.

[4] Id. at 122-130.

[5] Vide id. at 136-137, 157-159, 166-201.

[6] Id. at 134.

[7] Id. at 138.

[8] Id. at 210-217.

[9] Id. at 371-379.

[10] Id. at 380-391.

[11] Id. at 418-420.

[12] CA rollo, pp. 2-24.

[13] Penned by Court of Appeals Associate Justice Vicente L. Yap, with the concurrence of Associate Justices Arsenio J. Magpale and Apolinario D. Bruselas, Jr. Id. at 149-158.

[14] Rollo, pp. 8-41.

[15] Id. at 17.

[16] Deles, Jr. v. National Labor Relations Commission, 384 Phil. 271, 283 (2000).

[17] Vide Muaje-Tuazon v. Wenphil Corporation, G.R. No. 162447, December 27, 2006, 511 SCRA 521, 529.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Vide *Dator v. University of Santo Tomas*, G.R. No. 169464, August 31, 2006, 500 SCRA 677, 688; *Go v. Court of Appeals*, G.R. No. 158922, May 28, 2004, 430 SCRA 358, 366.

[20] NLRC records, p. 152.

ABOUT BATAS.ORG

Study smarter at BATAS.org

The Philippine bar review and law-school companion built around how your brain actually remembers.

The complete Philippine law library - free for everyone.

More than 100,000 Supreme Court decisions, Republic Acts, and executive issuances - full-text searchable, browsable by category and year, and always free. No paywall, no login. This PDF came from it.

Audio case-brief lectures.

Any decision becomes a podcast-style lecture - facts, issues, ruling, and doctrine - with read-along highlighting and a hands-free presentation mode. Study while commuting, working out, or resting your eyes.

Bar review built on the science of memory.

Complete, sequenced courses for all eight bar subjects, narrated like podcasts and reinforced with retrieval practice and spaced review - the study techniques with the strongest evidence behind them.

The full law-school curriculum.

One subscription unlocks the entire J.D. curriculum - every subject, every lesson, with your progress tracked down to the paragraph so you can pick up exactly where you left off, on any device.

Mock exams that tell you where you stand.

Timed multiple-choice exams graded instantly, with per-subject score breakdowns and focus suggestions that point you at your weakest topics first.

A study planner that keeps you on pace.

Set your schedule and BATAS tells you every day whether you are on track for bar day - and exactly which lesson to take next.

Start free at <https://batas.org>

The law library is free forever - and your first lesson is one click away.

The text of this document is an official public record and remains in the public domain. Formatting, presentation, and compilation © 2026 batas.org.

Downloaded free from the batas.org Law Library. Share it freely - the library is free for every law student, bar reviewee, and practitioner.