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## Teacher Fired for Staying at Girlfriend's Home

by Tom Gallagher

NCR Today

Several weeks ago I wrote **a column** on the "Justice in Employment" policy in the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis, a ground-breaking policy that actually gives its at-will employees several due process rights.

Now we have **a story** where a male Appleton, Wisc., teacher got fired for staying overnight at his girlfriend's home in contradiction to his Catholic school employment contract, which prohibits "unmarried cohabitation." The teacher claims the overnight was due to his desire to avoid drinking and driving, which is prudent.

Meanwhile, the tightly written employment contract apparently is a one-strike and you're out deal. Something doesn't seem right about all this... either there's more to the "cohabitating" issue or the Catholic school is strictly enforcing its contract. On a fundamental level, including the "no cohabitation" clause in the contract seems overly intrusive into the private life of the employees.

Is this common practice in Catholic school teacher contracts? Does the outcome here represent justice in employment?

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