

Erlich Law Firm Wins \$1.2 Million in Sexual Harassment Lawsuit Against Orange County

ORANGE COUNTY, CA, USA, December 8, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Erlich Law Firm](#) wins a \$1.2 million jury award for a client involved in a sexual harassment and retaliation lawsuit against the Public Defender's Office in Orange County, California.

The lawsuit, *Glenda Mendoza v. County of Orange*, was filed in Orange County Superior Court in April 2019. A unanimous jury vote awarded over \$1.2 million to Ms. Mendoza, including \$1 million in emotional distress damages and \$237,854 in lost wages for harassment and retaliation.

"Employers should be held accountable when they retaliate against employees who exercise their right to complain about workplace sexual harassment," commented employment attorney Jason Erlich of Erlich Law Firm, a law firm in Oakland, California. "Complaining about sexual harassment is a legally protected activity. In this case, we are pleased to have obtained a successful outcome for our client."

Erlich Law Firm represented Glenda Mendoza, a former employee to the Orange County Public Defender's Office who alleged she received a sexually explicit text message from her male supervisor in May 2018. The text contained an inappropriate GIF video and was sent during work hours, according to the lawsuit.

The supervisor waited ten minutes for Mendoza's reply and then called her, telling her to delete the text as it was meant for a friend. He later claimed during the trial that he had intended to send the message to his wife.

As a few months went by, the supervisor continued to threaten, intimidate, and criticize Mendoza's work. About three months after receiving the initial text message, Mendoza reported the issue to Human Resources.

The county launched an investigation and confirmed the harassment. Although the county Equal Employment Opportunity office recommended a further probe, no action was taken.

Several months later, the former Public Defender Sharon Petrosino sent an email stating that Mendoza was "...not a trustworthy reporter." The email instructed supervisors to carefully note what Mendoza said and have witnesses present while talking to her. Ms. Petrosino also attacked

Mendoza's work performance and credibility.

Mendoza claimed she suffered retaliation for reporting the [alleged sexual harassment](#). She was forced to resign in December 2018 after working at the Public Defender's Office for eleven years.

"Employees who have been subjected to sexual harassment are often reluctant to speak up about the misconduct out of fear of retaliation," said Erlich. "However, workers have legal recourse and do not have to tolerate unlawful behavior. An experienced employment attorney can help."

Glenda Mendoza v. County of Orange was filed in Orange County Superior Court, California, case number 30-2019-01063389-CU-OE-CJC.

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