

(PRACTICE AREA)

County Wins Whistleblower Lawsuit

SITUATION

A whistleblower lawsuit brought by three current or former deputies alleging retaliation for disclosing purported ticket quota and impound schemes within two High Desert sheriff's stations.

CHALLENGES

The complaint claimed that an officer faced retaliation after he "discovered sheriff's personnel assigned to the department's Narcotics Unit would routinely tow vehicles and 'flip' them by purchasing the vehicles at lien sales and selling them for profit."
The lawsuit also accused Victorville Sheriff's Station higher-ups of setting a quota of 200 traffic citations per month for motorcycle deputies — a policy that would be prohibited under state law — and deputies who failed to meet the quota were forced to work weekends or had their motorcycles taken away.

PROCESS

Susan Coleman and Paloma Peracchio, representing the county, however, say the three were not singled out and instead asserted their exception to decisions does not constitute retaliation on the department's part. Our attorneys also sought to show during the trial that reassignments were in fact routine.

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