

Quinn Emanuel Sues Los Angeles Seeking Reimbursement for Legal Fees in Ex-Sheriff's Case



Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, a prominent law firm based in California, has filed a lawsuit against the city of Los Angeles. The lawsuit aims to recoup more than \$280,000 in legal fees incurred during the firm's defense of former Los Angeles County Sheriff, Alex Villanueva. This move adds a fresh dimension to an ongoing legal dispute that emerged from an employment scandal within the county sheriff's office.

The lawsuit, filed on August 10th in the Los Angeles Superior Court, focuses on Quinn Emanuel's representation of Alex Villanueva in 2019. At that time, Villanueva faced legal action from the county due to his decision to reinstate a deputy sheriff who had been dismissed over allegations of domestic violence. This reinstatement was later deemed unauthorized by an appeals court.

Quinn Emanuel's latest legal complaint alleges breach of contract and other claims, asserting that the law firm had a valid contract as outside counsel for Villanueva. The firm maintains that it fulfilled its obligations under the contract. According to Quinn Emanuel's argument, the appointment of the firm as outside counsel was justified due to a conflict of interest between the sheriff's office and the Los Angeles County board.

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In response to the lawsuit, a spokesperson for Los Angeles declined to provide an immediate comment. Quinn Emanuel has not yet responded to inquiries regarding the matter.

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This lawsuit follows a prior legal battle between Quinn Emanuel and Los Angeles over legal fees related to Villanueva's case. In a 2021 case, Los Angeles had sued the law firm, alleging that their engagement agreement lacked validity and enforceability because the county had not approved the contract with the sheriff. Los Angeles County Judge Holly Fujie ruled in favor of Los Angeles in May, granting summary judgment. The judge also prohibited Quinn Emanuel from filing a "cross complaint" as part of the litigation. Quinn Emanuel, however, lodged an appeal against this decision last month.

According to the information presented in the new lawsuit, Quinn Emanuel had invoiced \$280,000 for its initial months of service to Villanueva. The lawsuit indicates that the firm's subsequent fees will be determined as part of the ongoing case.

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Notably, the new lawsuit does not directly address Quinn Emanuel's previous legal setback in the case initiated by Los Angeles.

Alex Villanueva, who was elected as the county sheriff in 2018, experienced a loss in the November 2022 election and therefore relinquished his post. The Los Angeles County sheriff's office, boasting a substantial workforce of 18,000 officers and professional staff members, claims to be the largest of its kind in the United States.

Don't be a silent ninja! Let us know your thoughts in the comment section below.