

# JD Howlette Law Files Federal Civil Rights Lawsuit to Protect Small Business Owner

*Federal lawsuit against Prince George's County and former owner of Iverson Mall alleges fraud and unequal treatment towards minority-owned business.*

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND, UNITED STATES, May 30, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [JD Howlette Law](#) recently announced that it filed a federal civil rights lawsuit against Prince George's County and AWE-AR Iverson Mall, LLC on behalf of small business owner Khao Hoang. The lawsuit, filed in the United States District Court for the District of Maryland (Case No. 8:23-cv-1272), alleges various civil rights violations and fraud, and seeks compensation for the substantial harm inflicted upon Mr. Hoang.



United States District Court for the District of Maryland

The [complaint](#) alleges that, in 2019, Mr. Hoang sought to open a hair and nail salon at the Shops at Iverson Mall in Temple Hills, Maryland. Mr. Hoang alleges that he obtained all the permits and passed all the inspections that Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE) required for the approval of a Use and Occupancy permit, which was needed to lawfully open the business. According to the complaint, DPIE approved Mr. Hoang's U&O permit but then refused to issue it to him for nearly four years due to an official policy or custom that selectively discriminated against small minority business owners.

In the complaint, Mr. Hoang asserts that the County's official policies and customs, along with the actions of its employees, deprived him of his fundamental rights to equal protection and due process under the law. These policies and customs, established and sanctioned by DPIE, resulted in systematic denial of justice and egregious violations of Mr. Hoang's constitutionally protected rights, leading to damages totaling over \$2,371,500.

Additionally, the complaint alleges that AWE-AR Iverson Mall, LLC (i.e., the prior owner of Iverson Mall) engaged in widespread fraud related to its leasing activities at the Shops at Iverson Mall.

Mr. Hoang seeks damages for the substantial harm he suffered as a result of this fraudulent conduct.

“Mr. Hoang is one of several small minority business owners who have been substantially harmed by DPIE’s egregiously discriminatory permitting practices at Iverson Mall,” says [Jordan D. Howlette](#), the firm’s managing attorney. “Simply put, DPIE cannot selectively refuse to issue U&O permits to qualified small business tenants at Iverson Mall while simultaneously issuing these permits to large businesses or those with political influence. At some point, the Office of the County Executive and the State’s Attorney Office need to take affirmative action to reign in this problematic Agency. Small business owners like Mr. Hoang are suffering significant harm in the interim. As with our other cases against DPIE, I look forward to obtaining swift justice for Mr. Hoang.”

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