

Keith Altman Secures Multi-Million Dollar RICO Verdict Against Northern Leasing Systems and Associates

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, July 15, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In a landmark legal victory, attorney [Keith Altman](#) successfully secured a jury verdict of nearly \$3 million on behalf of Elaine Agheepour and Michele Norris against Northern Leasing Systems (NLS) and other associated defendants. The verdict, delivered by a Southern District of New York federal jury, marks a significant win against fraudulent practices in the leasing industry.

Aghaeepour, et al. v. Northern Leasing, et al.;

Case No. 14-cv-5449-NSR-LMS, filed in USDC, Southern District of New York

The Case of Elaine Agheepour
Elaine Agheepour, a California resident and former owner of ABC Check Cashing, fell victim to NLS's deceptive practices in 2007 - 2008. Agheepour was unexpectedly garnished for a lawsuit she had no knowledge of, initiated by NLS. Despite never signing a lease agreement or a Personal Guarantee with NLS, she faced a default judgment and subsequent financial ruin. NLS's false derogatory reports to credit bureaus further exacerbated her struggles, leading to substantial alterations of her business and lasting financial damage.

The Case of Michele Norris

Similarly, Michele Norris, a Texas resident and former owner of M & J Hair Design, was embroiled in a fraudulent lease agreement with NBF Leasing a defendant and subsidiary of NLS in 2005. Unbeknownst to her, a contract and Personal Guarantee, bearing forged signatures, resulted in a



Keith Altman Founder of K Altman Law



Northern Leasing Systems, Inc.



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default judgment and severe credit harm. Despite returning the leased equipment and ceasing payments, Norris endured relentless harassment and unjust legal actions from NLS.

Intervention by the NY Attorney General

In 2016, the New York Attorney General (NY AG) filed a significant lawsuit against NLS and its affiliates, revealing the extensive fraudulent practices employed by the company. The NY AG's findings highlighted:

- Lack of supervision and training of Independent Service Organizations (ISOs).
- Engagement in widespread fraud and abuse of the NY City Civil Courts.
- Harassment and deceptive practices targeting personal guarantors.

The court ordered the dissolution of NLS, vacated default judgments, dismissed cases with prejudice, and mandated the disgorgement of \$680 million by NLS and nearly \$10 million by Joseph Sussman and his law firm.

The Jury Verdict

Despite the court's decision not to allow the plaintiffs to present the findings from the NY AG's case, Agheepour and Norris, represented by Keith Altman, successfully presented their case to the jury in June 2024. The jury concluded that the defendants had engaged in multiple violations, including RICO and Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) violations. The verdict included:

- RICO violations against all defendants.
- RICO conspiracy against all defendants except Cuccinata.
- FCRA violations against NLS and MBF Leasing.
- Violations of the NY Fair Credit Reporting Act.
- NY GBL 349 (unfair business practices) against NLS, MBF, Joseph Sussman, and Joseph I Sussman PC.

The total award amounted to just under \$3 million, plus interest and attorney fees.

Keith Altman's Statement

"This verdict is a significant step towards justice for victims of fraudulent leasing practices. Elaine Agheepour and Michele Norris have endured years of financial hardship and emotional distress due to NLS's actions. Today's decision affirms that these practices will not go unpunished."

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complexities of the law, providing tailored solutions that meet the unique needs of each client. Although the firm handles a variety of legal matters, four primary practice areas constitute the majority of cases at the K Altman Law: [student defense](#), special education, Title IX and civil rights. We pride ourselves on zealously representing our clients and offering them support and guidance at every stage from intake to case resolution. Our commitment to justice knows no bounds. Wherever you are in the nation, K Altman Law is here to serve you.

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