

# Mansour Law, LLC Files First Amendment Retaliation Lawsuit Against Bucks County, PA on Behalf of Fired Jail Lieutenant

*Lawsuit claims 16-year veteran of Bucks County Department of Corrections was fired for disclosing understaffing problems at the county jail.*

PHILADELPHIA, PA, UNITED STATES, September 5, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On August 27, 2024, [Mansour Law, LLC](#), a plaintiffs' employment law firm in Allentown, PA, filed a federal civil rights lawsuit on behalf of Ara Kimbrough against Bucks County, PA and several of its employees after Kimbrough was fired for disclosing to an outside attorney serial understaffing and security issues at the Bucks County Correctional Facility.

According to the lawsuit, in May 2024, Kimbrough, an Administrative Lieutenant and 16-year veteran of the Bucks County Department of

Corrections (DOC), made an unsolicited telephone call to Attorney Brian Zeiger, who was representing the estate of a deceased inmate in a wrongful death lawsuit against Bucks County. The inmate, Joshua Patterson, died in August 2022 after overdosing on drugs that were smuggled into the jail. During the call, Kimbrough shared with Attorney Zeiger that the inmate who snuck the drugs into the jail was able to do so because, on the date in question, the Records & Reception Unit of the jail was understaffed. Kimbrough also told Attorney Zeiger that understaffing of the jail, and the Records & Reception Unit specifically, was a serial problem about which he had complained to his superiors numerous times prior to Patterson's fatal overdose. Shortly after this phone call with Kimbrough, Attorney Zeiger attempted to use this new information to re-open discovery in the Patterson Estate's wrongful death lawsuit against the County. In so doing, he revealed to the County the identity of Kimbrough and the information



Mansour Law is an Allentown, PA law firm that fights for employees all across PA.

he shared.

Two weeks later, one of the County's deputy solicitors privately interviewed Kimbrough specifically about his communication with Attorney Zeiger. Kimbrough admitted to the conversation and disclosed everything he said to Attorney Zeiger. Then, on June 21, 2024, DOC Director David Kratz (also a defendant in the lawsuit) placed Kimbrough on an unpaid suspension pending an investigation into his communication with Attorney Zeiger. On July 24, 2024, Kimbrough was again interviewed by Human Resources Director Lauren Smith and Deputy Solicitor Shae Randolph (both of whom are also named defendants) about his conversation with Attorney Zeiger. Kimbrough, again, recounted the substance of his conversation, at which point he was accused by Smith of "violating County policies." Five days later, on July 29, 2024, Kimbrough was fired by Smith for "contacting" Attorney Zeiger "and sharing confidential information which pertained to a lawsuit against the DOC/County of Bucks."

Kimbrough is represented in the lawsuit by Attorney [William P. Mansour](#). "This may be one of the clearest cases of First Amendment retaliation I have ever come across, and that's not hyperbole," says Mansour. "The County even said in writing, in black and white, that it was firing my client solely for speaking to Attorney Zeiger. Lt. Kimbrough's conversation with Attorney Zeiger was not a part of his job and related to several important issues of public concern, not least of which is jail security. Because his speech did not undermine or disrupt the operations of the jail, the County's only reason for firing him was because it didn't like what he said. In our view, that's a textbook violation of my client's First Amendment right to free speech."

The lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, asserts claims of First Amendment retaliation against Bucks County, Smith, Randolph, and Kratz under federal law as well as wrongful discharge claims under state law. Kimbrough seeks back pay, reinstatement, compensatory damages, punitive damages, court costs, and attorneys' fees.

The case is captioned "Ara Kimbrough v. Lauren Smith, et al.," Civil Action No. Case 2:24-cv-04470-KSM.

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