

Scali Rasmussen Secures Full Defense Verdict On Behalf of Team Kia Mazda of El Cajon in High-Stakes Employment Trial

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, May 13, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- After a three-week trial and in a sweeping victory for Team Kia Mazda of El Cajon, a San Diego jury delivered a full defense verdict on all five claims asserted by the plaintiff in *Ganatta v. JKC Palm Springs Automotive, Inc.*, 37-2020-00028633-CU-WT-CTL (dba Team Kia Mazda of El Cajon). The verdict was rendered after less than seven hours of deliberation.

Led by Scali Rasmussen Shareholder [Jeffrey Erdman](#) and Principal [Jose Cabada](#), the defense team dismantled a case that originally sought more than \$20 million in damages, in which the plaintiff accused the dealership of disability discrimination, failure to accommodate, retaliation and workplace harassment.



Jeffrey Erdman

"From the outset, the Scali Rasmussen team was disciplined and strategic, leaving nothing to chance," said Chris George, Platform Manager. "Their thorough preparation and collaborative approach gave us complete confidence every step of the way. We felt fully informed throughout the process, and the outcome speaks for itself."

Scali Rasmussen secured key rulings that limited the plaintiff's evidence and expert testimony. In the end, the plaintiff called to the stand just two witnesses (including himself) and one damages expert. As a result of the favorable rulings on pretrial motions, no medical testimony was provided regarding plaintiff's alleged disability, purportedly resulting from his prior back injury and surgery. Scali Rasmussen's trial team also ensured that the jury had received important jury

instructions to guide them to their result, including the requirement that the employer had sufficient knowledge of the employee's condition to trigger any obligation on the employer's part let alone form the basis of any claims of discrimination or harassment. A pivotal jury instruction clarified that employers may rely on medical documentation—not just an employee's subjective belief—when evaluating disability accommodation requests.

"This win means a great deal to our client," said Erdman. "After five years of litigation, they've been fully cleared of all allegations. At every stage, our client stood firm—refusing to settle or admit wrongdoing, even when the plaintiff proposed a reduced settlement on the eve of trial. They knew the facts were on their side and had confidence that they would win this case. I fully supported their decision to hang in there and fight for what was right and true because I knew that they have always worked hard to support their employees and foster a culture of fairness and opportunity for all employees at the dealership."



Jose Cabada

Despite a highly controlled courtroom environment where oral argument was limited outside jury presence, the defense team navigated the trial with skill and precision, earning a complete defense verdict. Key findings by the jury included:

- Count 1 (Disability Discrimination) - 12 to 0: Disability was not a substantial motivating reasons for plaintiff's termination.
- Count 2 (Failure to Engage in the Interactive Process) - 11 to 1: The employer didn't know the plaintiff had a disability that required reasonable accommodation, so there was no failure to engage in the interactive process.
- Count 3 (Failure to Accommodate) - 12 to 0: There was no failure to accommodate that was a substantial factor in causing plaintiff harm.
- Count 4 (Retaliation) - 11 to 1: Plaintiff had not engaged in any protected activity for which he was retaliated against.
- Count 5 (Workplace Harassment) - 12 to 0: Plaintiff was not subjected to any harassing conduct at the dealership.

While the plaintiff still has some legal maneuvers available to challenge the jury's decision, we are confident that the verdict will hold and be upheld at all stages of further court proceedings. Our client continues to be committed to compliant employment practices and the fair treatment of all employees.

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