

Shegerian & Associates: Whistleblower Deputy Chief Alleges LAFD Silenced for Exposing Misuse of Funds

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, January 15, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A former Los Angeles Fire Department Deputy Chief with more than three decades of service has filed a lawsuit alleging she was forced to resign after reporting what she reasonably believed to be misuse of public funds, unlawful retaliation, and discrimination, according to a complaint filed January 15, 2026 in Los Angeles Superior Court (Case No. 26STCV01385).

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The lawsuit was filed by Jaime Brown, a 31-year veteran firefighter who was promoted to Deputy Chief of the Training and Support Bureau in January 2024.

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Carney R. Shegerian

According to the complaint, Brown alleges that after raising concerns regarding the handling and oversight of funds designated for wildfire response and training, she was subjected to escalating retaliation, including discipline she contends was pretextual, culminating in her forced resignation on April 6, 2025.

The complaint alleges that Brown's protected disclosures occurred during a critical period when Los Angeles was confronting severe wildfire threats, including the

destructive fires of January 2025. According to the filing, Brown served in a leadership role in the Department Operations Center during the emergency response, while simultaneously raising concerns about alleged misconduct and misuse of public resources.

Rather than investigate the issues she reported, the complaint alleges that Department leadership took adverse employment actions against Brown, including issuing a 16-day suspension that she contends was unsupported by the facts and imposed in retaliation for her disclosures and refusal to alter official evaluations and documentation.

“According to the lawsuit, Ms. Brown did exactly what whistleblower laws are intended to

protect," said Carney R. Shegerian, founding partner of [Shegerian & Associates](#), counsel for Brown. "The complaint alleges that instead of addressing serious concerns affecting public safety and taxpayer resources, the response was retaliation and discipline designed to silence her."

In addition to whistleblower retaliation claims under California Labor Code §1102.5, Brown's complaint asserts causes of action for discrimination, retaliation, and hostile work environment harassment under the Fair Employment and Housing Act, alleged violations of the Firefighter Procedural Bill of Rights, and intentional infliction of emotional distress. The lawsuit names the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Fire Department, and individual defendants.

The complaint alleges that the actions taken against Brown were part of a broader pattern intended to deter internal reporting of potential misconduct within the Department and to discourage others from raising similar concerns.

"This case raises serious questions, as alleged, about accountability within public safety agencies and whether statutory whistleblower and civil rights protections are being honored," Shegerian said. "Those questions should be answered through the judicial process."

Brown seeks compensatory and punitive damages, attorneys' fees, and other relief permitted by law.

About Shegerian & Associates

Shegerian & Associates has won clients over half a billion dollars in employment-based disputes and maintains a 98% success rate, with offices in Los Angeles, San Diego, Riverside, and New York.

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