

Highest Reported Illinois Verdict for Defamation

\$27,114,848

Former insurance investment managers fired for alleged ethics code violation

PLAINTIFF ASKED
\$17,000,000 + punitives

DEFENSE OFFER
de minimus amount

VERDICT
\$27,114,848



Plaintiffs are former employees of Allstate Insurance in the Equity Division, which managed investment portfolios for pension plans and insurance businesses. In October 2009, Allstate announced that it planned to close the Equity Division at the end of the year and would outsource the work to Goldman Sachs. Plaintiffs were fired on December 4, 2009 for allegedly violating the company’s ethics code—which rendered them ineligible for severance pay. The plaintiffs claimed substantial lost earnings as they have been underemployed or unemployed for six years. The defense insisted that the statements were true and not defamatory, contested causation of the plaintiffs’ inability to find comparable employment, and asserted that the plaintiffs had failed to mitigate their damages.

CASE REPORT

DANIEL RIVERA, DEBORAH JOY MEACOCK, STEPHEN KENSINGER, REBECCA SCHEUNEMAN V ALLSTATE INSURANCE CORP. 10C-1733 TRIED JUN. 6-21, 2016

VERDICT \$27,114,848: \$11,157,972 to Daniel Rivera (\$7,156,972 compensatory damages, \$4,000,000 punitive damages, \$1,000 damages for violation of Fair Credit Reporting Act); \$6,603,317 to Deborah Meacock (\$3,602,317 compensatory, \$3,000,000 punitive, \$1,000 FCRA); \$4,914,531 to Stephen

Kensinger (\$2,913,531 compensatory, \$2,000,000 punitive, \$1,000 FCRA); \$4,439,028 to Rebecca Scheuneman (\$3,438,028 compensatory, \$1,000,000 punitive, \$1,000 FCRA). FCRA punitive damages and plaintiffs’ attorneys’ fees are to be determined by Judge Hart.

JUDGE William T. Hart (USDC IL NE)

PLTF ATTY(S) Joanne Hannaway Sweeney and Robert D. Sweeney of RDS Law for all pltfs **DEMAND:** \$24,500,000 total

ASKED: \$17,000,000 + punitive

DEFT ATTY(S) Gerald L. Pauling, II, Uma Chandrasekaran, John W. Drury and Shomari D. Dailey of Seyfarth Shaw

PLTF EXPERT(S) Melissa Bennis (Accountant/CPA) for all pltfs

DEFT EXPERT(S) Christopher Haan, Ph.D. of Resolution Economics LLC, One N. Wacker Dr., #4075, Chicago, IL (312-626-2749) (Economist)