



MEDIA CONTACT:

Stefanie Stein; Winger Marketing
(312) 494-0422 (o)
(847) 609-4610 (c)
stefanie@wingermarketing.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Roy Sherman Files Civil Lawsuit Against Sheriff and Deputies of Marion County
Lawsuit alleges unlawful arrest and excessive force by police officers

(Silver Springs, Fla. – Jan. 23, 2015) Attorneys for private citizen, Roy Sherman, today announced the filing of a civil lawsuit against Chris Blair, Sheriff of Marion County, and Deputies Franco Porcelli and Paxton Sapp of the Marion County Sheriff's Office, for the use of unreasonable and excessive force and unlawful arrest of plaintiff Sherman on the evening of May 19, 2014. The claim also alleges malicious prosecution by the Marion County Sheriff's Office, leading to baseless and unlawful charges against Sherman, which were later dismissed. The suit alleges violation of Sherman's First, Fourth, and Fourteenth Amendment civil rights.

The complaint states that on the evening of May 19, 2014, Alexander Sherman, son of plaintiff Roy Sherman, was pulled over for speeding in Silver Springs by Deputy Porcelli. Alexander, who is autistic and has severe difficulties interacting and communicating with others, called his father, Roy, after Porcelli issued him a traffic citation. When plaintiff Sherman arrived in his own vehicle and still seated in it across the street, he attempted to speak to Porcelli about his son, Alexander, who had already signed the citation. Claiming interference with an ongoing investigation with Alexander, Porcelli told plaintiff Sherman to leave the scene immediately in response to Sherman's repeated attempts to inform the officer of his son's autism. This initial dialogue between Porcelli and plaintiff Sherman lasted less than half a minute, at which point Porcelli ordered plaintiff Sherman out of his vehicle and told him he was under arrest. After repeatedly demanding plaintiff Sherman exit the vehicle because he was "under arrest," Porcelli grabbed Sherman and attempted to pull him out of his vehicle, at which point Deputy Sapp arrived at the scene. Both Sapp and Porcelli physically forced Sherman out of his vehicle. Porcelli immediately and without warning, tased plaintiff Sherman who fell to the ground, rendered substantially immobile. Both deputies rolled Sherman onto his stomach and handcuffed him. Porcelli then tased Sherman approximately four more times to his back, while Sapp stood over a still immobile Sherman, yelling at him to stop resisting. Both deputies then placed plaintiff Sherman in the back of a police car.

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Following Sherman's arrest, the Marion County Sheriff's Office conducted its own investigation of the incident as stated in its Green Team report. The report, as approved by Sheriff Chris Blair, concluded no unlawful arrest and use of excessive force against plaintiff Sherman on May 19, 2014. In response to the Green Team report, the plaintiff alleges that Marion County Sheriff, Chris Blair, created and allowed a policy and culture that allowed its police officers to detain individuals without probable cause and use excessive force when doing so, among other abuses, negligence, and misconduct by both the Sheriff and its employees.

"It's unfortunate that today, a law-abiding citizen and father risks serious physical pain and debilitating emotional distress at the hands of power-abusing bullies who masquerade as law enforcement authorities," said Sherman's attorney, Antonio Romanucci, partner at [Romanucci & Blandin, LLC](#). "Even with police misconduct being publicly scrutinized for years, it is sadly, a major issue citizens have to contend with when interacting with police, for even the most mundane offenses. And so long as Sheriff Blair and government officials continue to ratify the type of unlawful physical abuse administered by Deputies Porcelli and Sapp onto its citizens, the community will be at risk of harm by the very people who have taken an oath to protect them."

For being unreasonably detained, battered, tased, falsely arrested, and maliciously prosecuted, plaintiff Sherman seeks judgment against Chris Blair, Sheriff of Marion County, and Deputies Franco Porcelli and Paxton Sapp of the Marion County Sheriff's Office, awarding compensatory and punitive damages plus attorney's fees and costs. The lawsuit is Case No: 5:15-cv-00036-MMH-PRL.

About Romanucci & Blandin, LLC

Romanucci & Blandin has been rated as a leading civil trial practice law firm in Chicago centering in personal injury and police misconduct. The attorneys at the Chicago law firm represent individuals and their families in catastrophic personal injury matters, wrongful death and workers' compensation cases. The cases that are referred to Romanucci & Blandin involve accidents or injuries which occurred due to negligence and carelessness on the part of individuals, governmental bodies and corporations of all sizes. Since its inception more than 15 years ago, Romanucci & Blandin has secured more than \$300 million in verdicts and settlements on behalf of their clients. For more information about Romanucci & Blandin, please visit www.rblaw.net or call (312) 458-1000.

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