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SAO4 PREVAILS IN PUBLIC RECORDS LAWSUIT, SEEKS REIMBURSEMENT FOR COSTS

The Fifth District Court of Appeals has affirmed a previous trial court ruling in *Curt Lee v. Fourth Judicial Circuit of Florida*, marking a second consecutive court victory for the State Attorney's Office.

In September 2022, after litigation spanning nearly two years on a variety of complaints, the Honorable Kathryn D. Weston ruled in favor of the State Attorney's Office on all fronts.

"The SAO's policy is reasonable and complies with the overall spirit and purpose of the PRA (Public Records Act)," Weston stated in her final judgment, referring to the office's charging policies and procedures.

Following the trial court's decision, Lee appealed Weston's ruling to the Fifth District Court of Appeal. The three-judge panel comprising the Honorable Chief Judge James Edwards and Honorable Judges Scott Makar and Joe Boatwright heard oral arguments of the appeal Oct. 10, 2023, in Daytona before affirming Weston's decision without opinion on Oct. 17, 2023.

The State Attorney's Office was represented at the trial and appeal level by Michael Lockamy of the Bedell Firm. With the affirmation, the State Attorney's Office will seek reimbursement for the costs incurred.

"Our Public Records team continues to do an outstanding job serving the public. This unnecessary litigation wasted taxpayer dollars and consumed countless hours of state resources. We will seek to recoup these costs," said State Attorney Melissa Nelson.

Judge Weston's final order can be found [here](#). The Fifth District Court of Appeal affirmation can be found [here](#).