

City Of Ferguson Hit With \$1.7 Million Settlement For Municipal Court Abuses

“A St. Louis County Circuit judge has given preliminary approval to a nearly \$1.7 million settlement on a class-action lawsuit. It affects about 10,000 people who were charged fees for the issuance of warrants or for failing to appear for a municipal court date in Ferguson, said Michael-John Voss, co-founder and special projects director with ArchCity Defenders,” reports *The St. Louis American*.

“These municipal court abuses were at the heart of the Ferguson uprising, which began after the killing of Michael Brown in August of 2014 and continued for about two years. Roelif Carter, a 62-year-old disabled military veteran, who depends on disability payment and food stamps, filed the case represented by ArchCity Defenders, the Saint Louis University School of Law Legal Clinics, and the Campbell Law Firm.”

“The city did not admit wrongdoing in the settlement. The American reached out to the city’s attorney for comment and is awaiting a response.”

“Circuit Judge Joseph Dueker has approved a settlement of \$1,699,405 to be distributed among Roelif and 10,000 person class, as a partial return for the exploitative warrant and failure to appear fees they were charged by Ferguson’s municipal court between 2009 through the present. The parties have valued the total settlement being worth more than \$5 million – a value that reflects the additional amount Ferguson would have continued to collect from 2014 through 2022 if it had not stopped charging the improper fees, attorneys said. The class of people who paid the fees will get 80 percent of what they paid back in a refund if they file a claim.”

Read the article.