Cy Pres Awards Help Western Center Create Transformative Public Policy Solutions for Millions of Low-Income Californians

Western Center conducts Impact Litigation, Legislative and Administrative Advocacy and Support for CA’s local legal aid programs in the areas of:

Access to Courts  Health Care
Consumer  Homelessness
Disability  Housing & Land Use
Discrimination  Income & Employment
Education  Racial Justice
Food Security  Welfare

A Cy Pres award is frequently a distribution of unclaimed, residual class action settlement funds to a charitable organization as authorized by the court.

By California statute and federal rules Cy Pres awards can go to Western Center in all state cases and many federal class actions.

“When the point of a case is to help people, if the persons harmed cannot be located, then it is important to get unclaimed settlement funds into the hands of an organization dedicated to helping those in need.”

Jeff Westerman
Westerman Law Corp.
Both State and Federal Cy Pres Awards Help Western Center’s Unique Impact Advocacy

“For both defense and plaintiffs’ counsel, public interest legal aid organizations are often the most appropriate and readily approved recipients of cy pres awards.”

Paul Hall
DLA Piper

State courts may order that residual settlement funds be paid to “…nonprofit organizations or foundations to support projects that will benefit the class or similarly situated persons …or to nonprofit organizations providing civil legal services to the indigent.” [CA CCP §384(b)]

Federal courts also will direct Cy Pres awards of unclaimed settlement funds to charitable organizations whose work has a close connection to the subject matter of the lawsuit.

Settling parties may consider directing all or part of the settlement payments to a nonprofit organization in non-class action suits or prior to class certification.

Previous Western Center Cy Pres awards include:

- Adams v. Universal Studios
- Almaro v. Quest Diagnostics
- Bronaugh v. Gala Corp.
- Lapan v. PVH
- Gravina v. United College Bureau
- Hoffman v. Avant Corp.
- Mambuki v. Securitas
- Nickel v. B. of A.
- Perez v. Weiser Security Services, Inc.
- Peterson v. Telefund
- Smokeless Tobacco Cases
- Weber v. Fredericks of Hollywood
- Western States Wholesale Natural Gas Antitrust Litigation

For more information:

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