

Court Orders Fraudulent Puppy Traffickers to Stop Selling Animals

Preliminary injunction granted in a lawsuit alleging Kenney family has defrauded customers and harmed puppies in violation of California law 07.29.2021

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Today Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy and the Animal Legal Defense Fund announced that the Los Angeles Superior Court has granted a preliminary injunction that halts the Kenneys, unscrupulous internet puppy sellers, from advertising and selling puppies until the lawsuit is decided on the merits. The plaintiffs — nine puppy purchasers who fell victim to the Kenney’s scheme, and Caru Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Caru SPCA) — moved to secure preliminary relief from the Kenneys’ ongoing illegal puppy trafficking on June 15, 2021.

For years, the Kenney family — husband and wife Trina and Rick, and adult children Elijah and Jezriel — have defrauded consumers in Southern California by misrepresenting the health, age, sex, and breed of puppies they sell through Craigslist, Recycler, and other websites.

The plaintiffs allege that the puppies are often dyed with hair dye to make them appear to be another color and breed, and are sold with fake immunization records to misrepresent the puppies as healthy and having been checked by veterinarians. Many of the puppies have died mere days after purchase from diseases concealed by the Kenneys and caused by the Kenneys’ failure to provide the puppies’ proper veterinary care, including immunizations.

In today’s decision, the court found the plaintiffs are likely to succeed on their claims, because the evidence presented “shows a consistent pattern” of the Kenneys misrepresenting the health, sex, and age of puppies they sold to the plaintiffs and of the puppies’ health rapidly deteriorating. The court also found that Caru SPCA showed a likelihood of success on the merits of its claim based on the unrebutted evidence demonstrating that the Kenneys have violated animal cruelty laws. The court issued the preliminary injunction to prevent the irreparable harm that could otherwise befall other consumers, who might fall prey to the

COURT ORDERS FRAUDULENT PUPPY TRAFFICKERS TO STOP SELLING ANIMALS

Kenneys' scheme and buy sick puppies.

"This is a first step toward putting the Kenney out of the puppy business", said Gary Praglin of the nationally recognized trial law firm Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy.

The Plaintiffs are represented by Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy and Animal Legal Defense Fund.

Plaintiffs' counsel Theresa Vitale of Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy said, "With this order, the Kenney family is enjoined from advertising and selling dogs in person, online, or otherwise until a final determination in this case. No other families will be misled or harmed while the fight continues in court on behalf of our nine plaintiffs.

"We are pleased that the court recognizes the grave harm the Kenneys' conduct poses to consumers and puppies and the order requiring them to stop selling dogs while the litigation proceeds," says Animal Legal Defense Fund Executive Director Stephen Wells. "This case should serve as a warning of the dangers of purchasing puppies—or any animal—online. A requirement to make a deposit, the transaction location being a parking lot, and lack of screening process are all indicators of a scam."