

Woman with Emotional Support Dog Traumatized by Groomer Has CPM File Lawsuit Against PetSmart

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Alison Cordova of Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy filed a lawsuit against PetSmart for inadequately training and supervising its groomers, which resulted in near-death and severe trauma to Sherrilyn Miller's beloved emotional support dog, Winter.

Practice Areas

Commercial Litigation

Winter used to be her owner's pillar of support. She was born and bred as a third-generation emotional support dog by Sherrilyn Miller, a long-time resident of the East Bay. Now Winter behaves as if she is a rescue animal who was previously abused, clinging to Sherrilyn at all times with fear and anxiety. All because Sherrilyn thought it would be cute to have a PetSmart groomer apply bows to Winter's fur after her bath.

Unfortunately, that became the worst decision of Sherrilyn's life to-date. On July 23, 2019, the San Leandro PetSmart groomer applied the bows by wrapping rubber-bands attached to the bows around Winter's ears instead of her fur, which you are NEVER supposed to do. And the groomer wrapped the bands so tightly that it cut off all blood circulation to Winter's ears.

Winter required emergency, life-saving surgery where the veterinarian had to cut-off the bands and repeatedly stab Winter's ears over and over again with an 18 gauge needle to release the blood clots in the hopes of saving Winter's life and ears. According to the vet, Winter would have been dead in 24 hours if her owner had not noticed the problem when she did and rushed Winter into surgery.

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“Winter was not just Sherrilyn’s best friend. Sherrilyn relied on Winter for her health and well-being, and now it is doubtful she will ever be able to again. PetSmart knows how important dogs and animals are to their owners. Yet we keep seeing animals get hurt and/or killed while in PetSmart’s care. And this groomer’s actions, in particular, were so far below the standard of care in the industry that it is shocking. Imagine if a daycare center sent your child home with rubber-bands so tightly wound around their little ears that their ears had turned black and hard and were dripping liquid. That is what happened here, but with Sherrilyn’s dog.”