



## Victory for Inmate's Rights: Winston Team Secures Verdict and Compensation in ADA Case

FEBRUARY 12, 2024

Following a jury trial in federal court in the Central District of Illinois, a Winston team secured a verdict and compensatory damages for our client, an inmate at the Pontiac Correctional Center.

“This Winston team displayed teamwork and focus in presenting a powerful case and obtaining an important victory for our client. **Johanna Hudgens’** closing arguments, both opening and rebuttal, were stellar for anyone, much less someone delivering a closing argument to a jury for the first time,” said retired Winston partner Tom Frederick, who tried the case along with the Winston team.

In 2018, our client filed a pro se complaint alleging a variety of claims, after which Winston was appointed to represent him. His claims against the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Rehabilitation Act were based on IDOC’s failure to either transfer him from Pontiac to an ADA-accessible facility or, alternatively, provide him with an ADA-accessible cell and shower at Pontiac to accommodate his inability to walk without assistance due to the mobility issues and chronic and severe pain from which he suffers from diagnosed medical conditions, including lumbar radiculopathy.

In addition to Tom and Johanna, the Winston trial team included **Josie Contreras, Leigh Frederick, Ken Berry, and Rudy Radic.** **Olga Pototskaya** played a prominent pre-trial role.

During the four-day trial, the Winston team convinced the jury that our client’s rights under the ADA and Rehabilitation Act had been violated as a result of IDOC’s denial of reasonable accommodations for our client’s disability, thereby subjecting him to unnecessary pain and suffering. The jury returned a unanimous verdict awarding our client \$150,000 in compensatory damages against IDOC; no punitive damages were allowed by law. Johanna gave the closing argument, presented our expert’s testimony, and cross-examined IDOC’s key witness, while Josie and Leigh appeared before the jury to present extensive deposition testimony.

[Learn more about Winston’s commitment to excellence in serving the public interest.](#)

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Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)

## Related Professionals

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Johanna Rae Hudgens



Josie Contreras



Leigh A. Frederick



Olga Pototskaya