

PRESS RELEASE

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Costa Mesa employees seek court intervention to stop layoffs

COSTA MESA Attorneys for the Costa Mesa City Employees Association today filed a complaint against the City of Costa Mesa asking a Superior Court judge to stop the layoff of more than 100 City employees.

The complaint, which includes a request for an immediate temporary restraining order to stop the layoffs and long term injunctive relief, also names Costa Mesa Chief Executive Officer Thomas Hatch as a defendant.

According to the complaint, the City's action to lay off City employees and outsource their jobs is prohibited under both California law and the agreement between the City and the City Employees' Association.

California law prohibits general law cities like Costa Mesa from outsourcing services except under very narrow circumstances. The City's action to outsource nearly all city services (except Police) exceeds the powers granted to municipalities and clearly violates California law.

Additionally, the City's contract with the Employees' Association prohibits this type of mass outsourcing during the term of the agreement, which doesn't expire until March 31, 2013.

"As we have said since the very beginning, the City did not have the legal authority to take this action," said Nick Berardino, General Manager of the Orange County Employees Association. "The Council majority has had a series of opportunities to avoid litigation, but they ignored repeated public and private warnings and instead irresponsibly chose to send layoff notices unlawfully to nearly half of the City's workers."

Please contact Jennifer Muir for a full copy of the complaint.