

## Law 360

### 'Frivolous' Defamation Suit From Diddy Security Guard Tossed

By [Mike Curley](#) | 2025-06-03

A New York federal judge has thrown out a defamation suit brought by the former head of security for Sean "Diddy" Combs against high-profile attorney Gloria Allred and her client in a sexual assault suit against Combs, finding several of the claims "frivolous."

In an [order](#) filed Monday, U.S. District Judge Analisa Torres said Joseph Sherman's attorney should have known from the start that at least five of Sherman's claims were "patently frivolous" and would not stand up to scrutiny in court. In addition to dismissing Sherman's suit against Allred and Thalia Graves, she sanctioned Sherman to pay reasonable costs and attorney fees.

According to the order, Sherman's allegations that Graves and Allred defamed him via the complaint filed against him and Combs fail out of the gate, as a complaint is under "absolute privilege" under New York law, and the statements against Sherman are relevant and pertinent to Graves' sexual assault claims.

In addition, the judge found that Sherman's allegations about Graves' and Allred's media statements fail because he doesn't identify the purported media communications or when or to whom they were communicated.

And while Sherman alleged that Graves messaged him saying she would not name him in her complaint if he testified against Combs, the judge wrote that can't be defamation as those statements were not made to any third party.

Sherman's suit is in response to Graves' suit, filed in Manhattan federal court in September, in which she [alleged that](#) Sherman and Combs drugged and raped her in 2001, recorded the attack and later shared the video. Allred, of [Allred Maroko & Goldberg](#), represents Graves in the suit, which is in discovery. Attorneys Mariann Meier Wang and Heather Gregorio of Wang Hecker LLP also represent Graves in the matter.

The claims are unrelated to a federal racketeering and sex trafficking [indictment](#) against the music mogul, which went to trial [in May](#).

Claiming he has "never met Thalia Graves, let alone raped her," Sherman sued Graves as

well as Allred, Wang and Gregorio, along with their respective firms, in November, but quickly dropped claims against all but Graves and Allred.

In January, Graves and Allred [moved to dismiss](#) the case, calling it an "utterly frivolous" move to intimidate Graves and a bid for notoriety, and arguing that the statements Sherman calls defamatory are under litigation privilege.

In Monday's order, Judge Torres also threw out Sherman's negligence and negligent infliction of emotional distress claims, saying he hasn't alleged any facts to support his assertion that Graves and Allred owed him any duty to "verify" Graves' allegations.

His intentional infliction of emotional distress claims, premised on Graves' and Allred's "false" accusations in their complaint, fails as the complaint in itself is not sufficient to support such a claim, the judge wrote, nor does the complaint support his claims for abuse of process, as the initiation of a civil action is not considered a process capable of being abused.

The judge also threw out Sherman's vexatious litigation claim as that is not a cause of action in New York.

Finally, the judge threw out the malicious prosecution claims, as those require that the underlying litigation be concluded in his favor, and that case is still ongoing.

"We are pleased that the court swiftly rejected this frivolous lawsuit, making clear that the legal system cannot be weaponized to intimidate survivors and their attorneys," Mariann Meier Wang of Wang Hecker LLP, representing Allred and Graves, said in a statement Tuesday. "We look forward to vindicating our client's rights in her underlying case that remains pending against defendants Combs and Sherman."

Allred said in a statement, "I commend Ms. Wang and Ms. Gregorio for their outstanding legal work and professionalism in filing the motion to dismiss. I am proud to continue to co-counsel with them to represent Ms. Graves in her pending lawsuit."

Representatives for Sherman could not immediately be reached for comment Tuesday.

Sherman is represented by Darnell D. Crosland of Crosland Law Group LLC.

Allred and Graves are represented by Mariann Meier Wang and Heather Gregorio of Wang

Hecker LLP, and Gloria Allred of Allred Maroko & Goldberg.

The case is Sherman v. Graves et al., case number [1:24-cv-08494](#), in the [U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York](#).

--Additional reporting by Emily Sawicki, Rachel Scharf and Pete Brush. Editing by Kelly Duncan.