

Lawyer faces US\$1m fine over medical witness slip

An insurance defence lawyer in Philadelphia is appealing against the fine handed down by a Common Pleas Court judge after one of her witnesses revealed a piece of information in court that was supposed to be kept secret.

Nancy Raynor says that her decade-old, four-lawyer law firm is under threat as a result of the penalty which has also seen her bank accounts frozen and client fees seized. She also fears she could lose her home. The penalty was given by Judge Paul Panepinto after a witness in a medical practice case revealed that the alleged



A lawyer has been fined a million dollars

victim was a smoker. This revelation breached an order by Judge Panepinto. The woman was suffering from cancer but the issue was whether she had received an adequate service from the hospital that failed to tell her about a suspicious nodule that appeared on an x-ray two years before her death. The lawyers on the other side said that they needed to seek a new trial as a result and that it cost them over \$1m.

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Excessive

A former common Pleas Court Judge, Gene Cohen, said: 'I have never heard of a lawyer being fined \$1 million for the kind of violation that was in this case, and it is apparently excessive. I don't know that the judge has sufficiently justified this kind of sanction.' Ms Raynor has appealed to the state Supreme Court. Source: Philly.com