

\$3 Million Verdict in Child Sexual Abuse Case Against Former Margate City Lifeguard

Atlantic City, NJ - August 1, 2025 - Following a five day trial in a child sexual abuse case, an Atlantic County civil jury rendered a verdict of \$3 million against a former lifeguard for Rachel (Neufeld) Del Rossi (Ms. Del Rossi consented to the use of her name). The verdict was comprised of \$1.75 million dollars in compensatory damages and \$1.25 million in punitive damages and Ms. Del Rossi was represented by Soloff & Zervanos attorney Jeffrey P. Fritz.

During the trial, the victim, Rachel Neufeld-Del Rossi and Mr. Fritz presented evidence that she was first groomed and sexually assaulted as a 15-year-old in the summer of 1979 by Steven Allen Chasens, a 24 year old lifeguard in Margate City, and that the abuse continued for four years. The victim's testimony was supported by letters, cards, photos, and plane tickets showing Chasens groomed and abused her in New Jersey and also transported her to travel to various locations, including Florida and the Cayman Islands, where he continued to sexually assault her. While Chasens denied years of abuse, the jury unanimously found him responsible for sexual battery, violations of the New Jersey Human Trafficking Act, and intentionally inflicting harm upon her.

Mr. Fritz stated: "We thank the jury for their service, attentiveness and willingness to condemn the scourge of child sexual abuse. I'm relieved that my client can continue to focus on healing and I remain in awe of her strength and courage." Ms. Del Rossi added: "I feel vindicated. After decades of struggling and having no voice for myself, tonight, for the first time, I can sleep knowing that I was believed. This verdict speaks for all survivors and I am forever grateful for not only the jury but also the Child Victims Act that gave me the only chance I could to seek accountability."

Mr. Chasens now resides in Coral Gables, Florida and practices as an acupuncturist and herbalist. The lawsuit was pursued under the Child Victims Act, a 2019 law which permits survivors of child sexual abuse to seek justice after years or even decades. The jury verdict follows a \$485,000 settlement reached earlier this year with the City of Margate.

Contact Soloff & Zervanos to find out how our attorneys may be able to help you achieve civil justice as a survivor of sexual abuse.