

suits & deals

Suit Over Truck's Collision With Car Settles for \$3.8 Million in Essex

A Newark woman who suffered neck and back injuries in a crash agreed to a \$3.8 million settlement in her Essex County suit, *Taylor v Lomma*, on Feb. 10.

Shaheerah Taylor was a passenger in a car driven by Clarissa Cokley on Madison Avenue in Newark on October 16, 2017, when the right side of their vehicle was hit by a truck that was pulling out of a curbside parking space. The truck was driven by James Lomma and owned by JFL Leasing of Kearny. Lomma was an employee of JFLomma Inc., doing business as Lomma Crane and Rigging, also of Kearny, according to the suit.

The car that Taylor was riding in suffered minimal damage in the crash, but Taylor, 38, who had previously had a slip-and-fall accident and another car crash, suffered an aggravation of

prior neck and back injuries, and required a cervical and lumbar fusion, said her attorney, **Barry Eichen** of **Eichen Crutchlow Zaslow** in Edison. Taylor was on disability at the time of the crash and therefore had no lost wage claim, he said.

But lawyers for the defendants—Lomma, JDL Leasing and JFLomma Inc.—said the collision was so minor that Taylor could not have suffered serious injuries, and her symptoms therefore were unrelated to the crash, according to Eichen. Her treating physicians, however, opined that even a minor impact could cause serious injuries, due to her already-compromised situation, Eichen said.

The parties agreed to the \$3.8 million settlement after mediation with Jack LIntner, a former presiding Appellate Division judge now with Porzio Bromberg &



BARRY EICHEN

COURTESY OF BARRY EICHEN

Newman in Morristown.

The defendants have \$1 million in coverage with Ironshore Specialty Insurance and a \$5 million excess policy with AXIS Surplus insurance Agency.

Laura Lelio of Goetz, Schenker, Blee & Wiederhorn in Livingston represented the defendants. She did not respond to a call about the case.

— Charles Toutant