

# UTA Scores Win Over CAA In Agent-Poaching Suit; Escapes Punitive Damages



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by [Dominic Patten](#)  
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**UPDATED with CAA statement:** Just over a year after [UTA snared five senior CAA comedy agents and a number of their clients](#), the subsequent legal battle took another turn – one that was very good for UTA. While CAA seek punitive damages from its former agents Greg McKnight and Greg Cavic and also can file another amended complaint, the agency can't go after the other agency for any such damages nor attorney's fees at this stage.

I've learned that next amended complaint from CAA could come in the next three weeks and include language that once again could put punitive damages against UTA back on the table. A hearing on summary judgement is currently set for September 7 with a possible trial to start on December 12 if it gets to that.

But as of now, in the tentative ruling from L.A. Superior Court Judge Lisa Hart Cole this morning, UTA has avoided such damages. That means the striking of the punitive damages and fees against UTA is a win for the agency, which had sought the moves in a motion of its own.

"A corporation is not deemed to ratify misconduct, and thus become liable for punitive damages, unless its officer, director, or managing agent actually knew about the misconduct and its malicious character," Cole said in her tentative ruling, which was adapted after Wednesday's hearing. "There are no allegations that officers, directors or managing agents of Defendant United ratified or authorized Defendants Cavic's and McKnight's actions."

The agency's main lawyer Bryan Freedman said in a statement this morning: "We are thrilled the court granted UTA's motion and decided to strike CAAs claim for Attorneys fees and also decided to strike the punitive damage allegations against UTA." UTA did not get struck "inflammatory allegations" that they contested. "The judge ruled on a pleading CAA filed last September," said CAA's lead lawyer Anthony Oncidi at Proskauer today. "Since that time, CAA has learned through discovery that UTA's high-level management was directly involved in the wrongful actions that they and the individual agents undertook. Judge Cole invited CAA to amend its pleading to add those additional facts to the pending lawsuit, which CAA said it would do within 20 days."

After the poaching of the comedy agents and the migration of a number of their big clients, CAA started legal action over the "illegal" move [on April 2 last year](#). That seven-claim complaint was [followed by an first amended complaint in September](#). The matter today has gone into the judge's chambers after the hearing concluded.

That means the battle between the two uber-agencies isn't over by any means. Arbitration in the matter is ongoing. As stated, CAA still has the right to bring a new filing and to seek punitive damages against now-UTA agents McKnight and Cavic – where that takes this civil case next remains to be seen.

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