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## Show Me The Money! CNN To Pay \$76 Million To Resolve Labor Board Complaints

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Settlements reaching into the tens of millions of dollars – when they occur – typically are seen in product liability, mass tort, and large commercial contract dispute lawsuits. When they happen in the employment context, they almost always are seen in nationwide class or collective actions for alleged harassment, discrimination, wage-law violations, etc.

Well, it's time to add labor law to the mix, because the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) just saw its biggest settlement sum ever.

Specifically, [the agency reports](#) that the news network CNN agreed to pay a record \$76 million to resolve long-running alleged labor law violations.

According to the press release: “As part of a settlement signed today, CNN has agreed to pay \$76 million in backpay, the largest monetary remedy in the history of the National Labor Relations Board. The backpay amount, larger than what the Agency collects on average in a typical year, is expected to benefit over 300 individuals.”

CNN was accused of terminating a slew of union workers in 2003, hiring non-union workers to replace them, and then refusing to recognize the union which represented the original workforce. The NLRB ultimately found violations of the National Labor Relations Act related to CNN's actions, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit largely affirmed the agency's

findings but remanded some issues back to the Board.

As further stated in the NLRB press release: “After the case was remanded, the parties agreed to resolve their dispute through the Board’s Alternative Dispute Resolution program. Since then, numerous Board staff have worked diligently with all concerned parties to reach today’s settlement.”

Settlements of this amount are virtually unheard of in labor law, so this case offers a cautionary tale to companies that want to keep it that way: union employee terminations – especially ones on a large scale – must be carefully navigated and strategically thought out.