

## Former treasurer sues B/E Aerospace of Wellington, claiming he was improperly fired

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Former B/E Aerospace Inc. treasurer Jeffrey Holtzman is suing the Wellington-based aircraft cabin maker, saying it breached his employment contract and violated the federal medical leave law.

Holtzman claims in his Palm Beach County Circuit Court suit that boss Thomas McCaffrey, B/E Aerospace's chief financial officer -- also named individually in the suit -- browbeat him and improperly fired him.

B/E Aerospace is a leading designer and retrofitter of airplane cabins for commercial airlines that has been enjoying record backlogs of orders and whose top executives are among the highest compensated in South Florida.

Holtzman, who worked for B/E Aerospace for 14 years, was fired from his job as the company's vice president for finance and treasurer in April, according to his lawsuit, filed last month. The former executive claims his removal was the result of McCaffrey's "personal vendetta against Holtzman."

***"This is an unusual case where we were so outraged with his mistreatment that we took on his case," said Steven Schwarzberg, the lawyer representing Holtzman. His West Palm Beach firm normally represents employers in litigation.***

B/E Aerospace and McCaffrey "vehemently deny all allegations and we intend to vigorously defend the suit," said Michelle Stocker, a Greenberg Traurig lawyer who is representing both the company and McCaffrey. McCaffrey joined the company in 1993, according to the firm's Web site.

The lawsuit says McCaffrey is an "intimidating bully who demanded absolute unquestioned obedience to his wishes and whims." Holtzman claims McCaffrey harassed other executives and officers with name-calling that included "incompetent idiot," "useless," and "retarded little brother."

In recent months, Holtzman said he suffered a spike in blood pressure, was hospitalized and later granted leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act, according to the lawsuit. McCaffrey interfered with Holtzman's leave, the lawsuit says, and made it appear the treasurer instead resigned to deny Holtzman compensation, stock and other benefits.

B/E Aerospace's stock, which is traded on Nasdaq, has seen a steady rise in price in recent years. On Monday, the stock closed at \$38.95, up 5 cents.