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Submission date: 02-Jun-2021 11:03AM (UTC-0400)

Submission ID: 1599076331

File name: hallmark_inc._v._Murley.edited.docx (19.85K)

Word count: 704

Character count: 3988

Hallmark Cards, Inc. v. Murley Case Analysis

Name

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Parties

The litigant in the case is Hallmark Cards Inc. because it filed the lawsuit against the defendant Janet Murley, an employee with the group vice-president of marketing.

Facts

The case between Hallmark Cards Inc. v. Murley has significant facts because Marley was working in the company. Miller (2015) stated that Murley was the group vice-president of advertising at Hallmark Cards Inc. This made Murley manage many operations and resources of the company, including being responsible for the product and business development, promotion and examination of the functions. Some of the critical company information that Murley had access to include the business plan, trade secrets, financial information and market research. Moreover, Murley's work was substituted by Hallmark in 2002 when the company was restructuring. Therefore, this resulted in the company and Murley arriving at an understanding of division that drew the terms of her withdrawal.

Nevertheless, Murley's noncomplete division ended in 2006, and she acknowledged a 125000 United States dollars consultancy work for Recycled Paper Greetings (RPG) (Miller, 2015). Therefore, Murley disclosed that she provided RPG patented Hallmark information during that work, including their business model design, long-term industry assessment market research, and customer purchasing process information. This resulted in Hallmark suing Murley for breach of contract, discussing Hallmark confidential information and misuse of trade secrets.

Procedure

Hallmark Cards Inc. sued Murley, who was the previous work in the company because she dishonored the withdrawal agreement and disclosed vital information of Hallmark to RPG.

Therefore, the lower court's outcome was to rule that Murley should pay 860000 United States dollars, hence Hallmark winning the case (Miller, 2015).

On the other hand, Murley appealed to the district court, which was then dismissed. Murley moved on to appeal to the supreme court, arguing that the district court was wrong in informing the jury on antagonistic implication and that the outcome on Hallmark's violation of agreement was unfair. Therefore, the court's verdict was altered and sustained.

Issue

The central question that the case did the defendant provides the critical information of the plaintiff to sabotage their operations and have personal gains from the RPG.

The case comprises the contract agreement violated by the defendant; therefore, one of the applicable laws includes the common law. Llewellyn (2016) claimed that contracts are always controlled and enforced by state laws where thee understanding was made. Nevertheless, the law will apply based on the type of contract. Common law is essential because it deals with employment and business agreements. Hallmark Cards Inc. employed Murley; therefore, the common law will apply to the case.

Holding

The court resolved the case by reviewing the issues presented t them. Therefore, considering that Murley violated the contract agreement and disclosed the trade secrets and other critical information to RPG, it indicated that she dishonored the agreement. Also moreover, after termination, Murley kept Hallmark Inc's information after her work termination. Although she provided more reasons for arguing the case to be ruled otherwise, the facts could not be altered. Thus, the court ruled in favor of Hallmark Cards Inc.

Reasoning

The court ruled the case with the reasoning that both parties were present while all the facts were presented. Considering that for the past five years since the termination of the work agreement, Murley had the Hallmark Inc. information she detached forty-eight hours before investigating her personal computer. Thus, it illustrated her intention to suppress the information. Also, Murley had obtained consultancy work with RPG and that Hallmark had to receive equal damages to the variance of 735 000 dollars severance payout to Murley and 125000 compensations. This was the sum that Murley was paid by RPG.

In summation, despite the arguments that there was poor faith and bias findings in the trial, Murley had to suffer the consequences of her action. Murley's violation of the contract termination agreement significantly affected Hallmark Inc. because their secret trademarks were released. However, Murley needs to understand the concept of work confidentiality and maintain it.

References

- Llewellyn, K. N. (2016). *The common law tradition: deciding appeals* (Vol. 16). Quid Pro Books.
- Miller, R. L. (2015). *Cengage Advantage Books: Fundamentals of Business Law Today: Summarized Cases*. Cengage Learning.

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