

Newsday

LONG ISLAND

NEWSDAY.COM

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 24, 2007 | LONG ISLAND EDITION

LONG ISLAND

A40

Trial near in officer's lawsuit

■ Plaintiff says that after inmate stabbed him and he suffered post-traumatic stress, bosses harassed him

BY SID CASSESE
STAFF WRITER

Opening statements were to begin today in the federal trial of a correction officer charging harassment and disability discrimination against his bosses in the sheriff's department and against Nassau County.

Fred Brewington, the Hempstead lawyer for plaintiff Edmund Scotti, said at 5 p.m. yesterday he thought he had

reached a monetary settlement with the county. "I'm pleased that we can put this matter behind us," said Brewington.

But shortly afterward, County Attorney Lorna Goodman said there was no settlement.

A jury was completed Monday in the \$30-million lawsuit filed by Scotti, formerly of Bethpage and now of Mauldin, S.C. He charged that, after being stabbed in the face by an inmate in December 1997, he suffered post-traumatic stress and, as a result, his bosses harassed and intimidated him, forcing him to remain in his home despite notes from his psychiatrist saying the confinement endangered his mental health.

Later, he said, the department unilaterally filed retirement papers for him and refused to withdraw them at his request.

"The treatment I received is not what I expected after [17] years of service," Scotti, 46, said earlier in his lawyer's office.

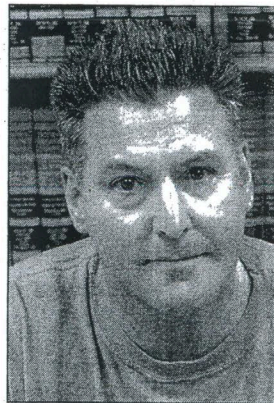
But Goodman replied that the county did what it could to accommodate Scotti, treating him as it would any other correctional officer, even better, in some instances. "We made an exception for him after notes from his psychiatrist and let him fax rather than call in, as the calling seemed to bother him," she said.

"The guy is getting three-quarter retirement pay of

\$51,600, and that's \$600 more than his full pay while on sick leave. He's living in South Carolina and can work any job he wants. I don't understand what he expects to gain from this lawsuit," she said.

Goodman said the trial in the federal court is on a single issue: whether the county filed the retirement papers in retaliation for Scotti's asking to be relieved of his house confinement. "And it's obvious that we simply acted responsibly and on our psychologist's opinion that Mr. Scotti would not be able to return to work for the department full time," she said.

The case is before U.S. District Court Judge Brian Cogan in Brooklyn.



Edmund Scotti seeks \$30M.