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IN THE COURT OF APPEAL OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SECOND APPELLATE DISTRICT

DIVISION EIGHT

JAY W. CRIDER,

Plaintiff and Appellant,

v.

GRM INFORMATION  
MANAGEMENT SERVICES OF  
CALIFORNIA, LLC,

Defendant and Respondent.

B342639

Los Angeles County  
Super. Ct. No. 24STCV10976

APPEAL from a judgment of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County, Barbara M. Scheper, Judge. Affirmed.

Brower Law Group, Steven Brower and Tae J. Im for Plaintiff and Appellant.

O'Hagan Meyer and Brendan T. Sapien for Defendant and Respondent.

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Jay Crider sued his employer GRM Information Management Services of California, LLC. The trial court granted

GRM California sanctions in connection with GRM California's motion to quash a subpoena to third party HCA Healthcare, Inc. Crider appeals the sanctions. We affirm.

Crider alleged as follows. GRM California provides enterprise content management systems, document storage, and scanning services. GRM California hired Crider in 2008 to help develop a new digital division focusing on electronic document management. In addition to his base salary, Crider was eligible to receive commissions as set forth in various commission plans GRM California offered each year. Crider believed GRM California made errors in calculating commissions under the plans, but his complaints were to no avail. After GRM California promoted Crider, it failed to pay him commissions he had already earned. Despite these issues, Crider was the top producer in the company and made the "President's Club," a title given to employees achieving at least 125% of the sales quota.

Crider's further allegations were that, in 2019, GRM California suffered what Crider terms a "computer incident," which was some type of hacking. GRM California's agreements with its clients required it to inform the clients of the attack. Crider alleges GRM California failed to do so. Instead, the executive vice president distributed a script to assist GRM California personnel in hiding the attack from clients. Crider refused to do so. After his refusal, GRM California excluded Crider from further communications about the incident.

Crider alleges GRM California began retaliating against him after this. GRM California changed Crider's compensation plan to make it harder for him to hit his targets and bonuses. Although Crider continued to perform well enough to achieve membership in the President's Club, GRM California withheld

the title until Crider asked why he had not been recognized. When Crider complained to GRM California's CEO that he was being denied earning opportunities, the CEO threatened to write Crider up for being unprofessional and insubordinate.

Crider eventually deemed himself constructively terminated and resigned. He sued GRM California alleging various employment law causes of action and retaliation associated with his refusal to lie about the computer incident.

About a month after Crider filed suit, he issued subpoenas to 11 non-party clients of GRM California. A few weeks later, Crider served a couple more non-party subpoenas. The subpoenas listed topics of examination about the clients' relationships with GRM California, services provided, the clients' requirements for data storage, and any communications from GRM California. Crider did not serve GRM California with copies of the subpoenas until GRM California learned about the subpoenas from its clients.

Crider issued one such subpoena to law firm Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP. Pillsbury represented GRM California's parent company GRM Information Management Services, Inc. (GRM Inc.) in pre-litigation mediation with Crider and provided advice about the complaint once filed. Pillsbury also represented GRM Inc. in a federal suit against Crider alleging Crider improperly accessed GRM Inc. emails after his resignation. By coincidence, Pillsbury also was a customer of GRM: Pillsbury stored data with GRM.

Pillsbury moved to quash the subpoena. After a hearing, the trial court granted the motion and awarded Pillsbury \$12,500 in sanctions. Crider has also appealed this ruling, which we

address in a separate opinion. (See *Crider v. Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP* (May 29, 2026, B342274 [nonpub. opn.] )

GRM moved to quash a number of the other subpoenas, including one to HCA Healthcare, Inc. After the hearing and order on the Pillsbury subpoena, Crider withdrew his subpoenas to GRM California's clients, including HCA, rather than opposing the motion to quash. In his opposition brief to the motion, Crider only opposed the sanctions request.

By the time of the hearing, then, the only remaining issue was sanctions. The trial court found Crider's decision to serve subpoenas on GRM California's clients before conducting discovery on GRM California suggested a "purpose other than fact-finding" and that "given the timing" Crider's "early subpoenas to [GRM California]'s clients constitute an abuse of the discovery process." The court therefore found sanctions appropriate. GRM California's counsel represented that a partner spent 11.3 hours at \$305 per hour and an associate spent 43.6 hours at a rate of \$250. The court reduced the requested hours by the amount attributed to the reply, finding Crider's withdrawal of the subpoenas made it moot. The court thus awarded \$11,517.50.

Crider appeals the imposition and amount of sanctions. Because the trial court did not abuse its discretion in imposing the sanctions, we affirm.

Crider argues the trial court made erroneous assumptions in granting the motion to quash. But Crider withdrew his subpoena before the hearing. The court therefore did not rule on the merits of the motion to quash, stating "the only remaining issue is sanctions," and Crider has waived any arguments about the merits of the subpoena.

Crider next argues GRM California filed its motion to quash in the wrong court because a court in Tennessee issued the subpoena to HCA. Again, because Crider withdrew the subpoena before the hearing, arguments relating to the merits of the motion are moot. However, we note Crider provided GRM California a copy of only the California subpoena to HCA, not the Tennessee one. Crider cannot argue GRM California should have filed its motion in Tennessee when he did not inform GRM California of the foreign subpoena until after GRM California filed the motion.

Finally, Crider argues the trial court abused its discretion by awarding GRM California excessive fees in connection with the motion to quash. The trial court considered the hours spent on the motion and the attorney's rates and found them reasonable. The court reduced the amount requested by the time spent on the reply, which the court found the withdrawal of the subpoenas mooted. The trial court did not abuse its discretion.

Crider further argues the \$11,571.50 was excessive in light of the amounts of sanctions awarded by the trial court in connection with later discovery motions. We will consider later award amounts if they are appealed and when they are before us. For purposes of this appeal, we consider whether the court abused its discretion in awarding fees in connection with this motion. We affirm because there was no abuse.

**DISPOSITION**

We affirm the order and award costs to GRM California.

WILEY, J.

We concur:

STRATTON, P. J.

SCHERB, J.