



BRIEF

Blue Shield of California files suit against whistleblower

By Heather Caspi

Published Nov. 11, 2015

Dive Brief:

- Nonprofit insurer Blue Shield of California is going after its former public policy director, Michael Johnson, who left the company eight months ago and has since been a vocal critic of the insurer.
- Johnson, who accuses Blue Shield of operating like a for-profit company, has influenced regulatory scrutiny and has attracted more than 13,000 supporters to his online petition.
- Blue Shield has now filed a breach of contract complaint in return, saying Johnson disclosed confidential company information.

Dive Insight:

Johnson has proven a major thorn in Blue Shield's side, with his criticisms about the company's corporate conduct and public obligations impacting California's review of the company's massive acquisition of Medicaid health plan Care1st. The deal was approved, along with several conditions for the company, the Los Angeles Times reports. Johnson may also have influenced the California's insurance commissioner's investigation into Blue Shield's executive pay and this summer's California

Franchise Tax Board's audit.

Blue Shield says it's asking its former exec to return confidential information and stop disclosing it, but says it is not seeking damages.

Johnson, meanwhile, told the Times the litigation is without merit and intended to crush him with legal bills. "I won't back down. I'm going to keep speaking out, louder than ever, about Blue Shield's misconduct as a nonprofit," he said.

Recommended Reading:

 LOS ANGELES TIMES

Insurer Blue Shield sues ex-executive who became nonprofit's critic [↗](#)

 MAKEITRIGHTBLUESHIELD.ORG

Blue Shield sues whistleblower [↗](#)