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Omagh accused lose legal aid bid

([Irish News](#))

Two defendants in the £14 million Omagh bomb compensation case lost a court action yesterday against the lord chancellor's decision to grant the claimants legal aid of £860,000.

Colm Murphy, from Dundalk, and Seamus Daly, from Cullough, Co Monaghan, alleged bias in the decision to approve exceptional expenditure to assist the families of the dead and injured to pursue their court action.

But Mr Justice Gillen in the High Court in Belfast dismissed a claim that legislation passed in 2005 approving such expenditure was "merely a cloak and a vehicle to meet the commitment to the Omagh families".

The judge said there was nothing improper or unlawful in the policy which enabled public funding to be made available.

"I am completely satisfied that the commitment that government ministers made to the Omagh families to provide funding for them was open, transparent and consistently made from 2003 onwards," the judge said.

Others being sued in the case are Seamus McKenna, from Silverbridge, Co Armagh, Liam Campbell, Dundalk, and Michael McKeivitt, from Blackrock, Co Louth.

The compensation case has been provisionally fixed to start on September 24.

June 16, 2007

This article appeared first in the June 15, 2007 edition of the [Irish News](#).

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