

**FOR RELEASE DECEMBER 29, 2021**

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**Attorney Statement for James M. Bergener**

In our modern world, people often exploit television and social media to twist facts and influence opinions. Sadly, online public shaming can be a tool for emotional and financial leverage. Noella Bergener has used social media and television to do just that. Our goal is to provide the public with the facts related to James Bergener's ongoing divorce from Noella Bergener.

- James and Noella dated for 5 years. They were legally married on June 18, 2020. Their marriage lasted about one year.
- James and Noella moved their family to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in late 2020. They were granted permanent residence in January 2021. James and Noella signed documents, under penalty of perjury, stating they intended to permanently reside in Puerto Rico. The only house they own is in Puerto Rico. Noella made several social media posts in 2021 sharing the family's excitement about living in Puerto Rico.
- In May of 2021, Noella left the family home in Puerto Rico and returned to California to pursue a television role on *Real Housewives of Orange County*. James continued to reside in Puerto Rico. He still resides in Puerto Rico today.
- In late July 2021, James told Noella he did not want their son to be part of the *Real Housewives* television show. James does not want their son exploited for fame and ratings. (*We aren't mentioning their son's name for the same privacy concerns.*)
- On July 29, 2021, Noella's legal representatives told our firm that Noella was going to file for separation from James. James filed for divorce the next day in Puerto Rico.
- After multiple hearings, a Puerto Rico judge ruled Puerto Rico is the appropriate jurisdiction for the divorce proceeding. James and Noella both appeared, represented by Puerto Rico lawyers, and made their respective cases. Noella's public claim that there was a "fraudulent divorce" is simply false.
- A Puerto Rico court divorced James and Noella, making them single people, on December 8, 2021. Custody and financial issues will be addressed separately if a settlement is not reached.

- Since September 2021, James and Noella have participated in mediation and ongoing settlement discussions about custody and financial issues of the one-year marriage. A retired judge acted as mediator. James and Noella have both been represented by lawyers during settlement discussions. James believes his proposals are fair, generous, and within the bounds of the law.
- Since August 1, 2021, James has repeatedly asked to see his son. He has paid substantial sums in childcare, housing, therapy, health insurance, food, other expenses for his son, and amounts that supplement Noella's lifestyle. James feels Noella is withholding their son and using the media to get more than she is entitled. James feels extorted.

James has not and will never abandon his son. He loves his son dearly. Any insinuation to the contrary is a lie. James hopes this public release speaks truth to the derogatory statements Noella continues to spread. James will not tolerate Noella exploiting their son for fame or financial leverage. James asks everyone to, please, respect his son's privacy and to not believe everything they see on social media and *Real Housewives*.