

## **Palsgraf v. Long Island Railroad Co. – Document-Style Case Brief**

**Court:** New York Court of Appeals

**Year:** 1928

**Procedural History:** The plaintiff brought a negligence action against the railroad after being injured on a train platform. The trial court found in favor of the plaintiff. The intermediate appellate court affirmed. The defendant appealed to the New York Court of Appeals.

**Facts:** While the plaintiff stood on a railroad platform, railroad employees assisted a man boarding a moving train. The man dropped a package containing fireworks, which exploded upon impact. The explosion caused scales at the far end of the platform to fall and injure the plaintiff.

**Issue:** Does a defendant owe a duty of care to a plaintiff who is injured by an unforeseeable consequence of the defendant's conduct?

**Rule:** Negligence requires a duty of care owed to the plaintiff. Duty is limited to harms that are reasonably foreseeable to persons within the zone of danger.

**Holding:** The court held that the railroad owed no duty to the plaintiff because the injury was not reasonably foreseeable.

**Reasoning:** The court emphasized that negligence is relational and depends on foreseeability. The railroad employees' conduct may have been careless toward the passenger, but it created no foreseeable risk to the plaintiff. Without a duty, there can be no negligence.

**Disposition:** Judgment reversed. Complaint dismissed.