



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY COUNSEL

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February 21, 2018

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TO: CELIA ZAVALA
Acting Executive Officer
Board of Supervisors

Attention: Agenda Preparation

FROM: ROGER H. GRANBO (RHG)
Senior Assistant County Counsel
Executive Office

RE: **Item for the Board of Supervisors' Agenda**
County Claims Board Recommendation
Juan Isaac Garza v. County of Los Angeles, et al.
Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC 553 211

Attached is the Agenda entry for the Los Angeles County Claims Board's recommendation regarding the above-referenced matter. Also attached are the Case Summary and Summary Corrective Action Plans to be made available to the public.

It is requested that this recommendation, the Case Summary, and the Summary Corrective Action Plans be placed on the Board of Supervisors' agenda.

RHG:scr

Attachments

Board Agenda

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS

Los Angeles County Claims Board's recommendation: Authorize settlement of the matter entitled Juan Isaac Garza v. County of Los Angeles, et al., Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC 553 211 in the amount of \$5,900,000 and instruct the Auditor-Controller to draw a warrant to implement this settlement from the Sheriff's Department's budget.

This lawsuit alleges deliberate indifference to an inmate's medical needs while he was incarcerated at Twin Towers Correctional Facility.

CASE SUMMARY

INFORMATION ON PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF LITIGATION

CASE NAME	Juan Isaac Garza v. County of Los Angeles, et al.
CASE NUMBER	BC553211
COURT	Los Angeles Superior Court
DATE FILED	July 30, 2014
COUNTY DEPARTMENT	Sheriff's Department and Department of Mental Health
PROPOSED SETTLEMENT AMOUNT	\$ 5,900,000
ATTORNEY FOR PLAINTIFF	Hermez Moreno, Esq. Raymond Boucher, Esq.
COUNTY COUNSEL ATTORNEY	Lucia Gonzalez Deputy County Counsel
NATURE OF CASE	<p>This is a recommendation to settle for \$5,900,000 a negligence lawsuit filed by Juan Isaac Garza a pre-trial detainee at Twin Towers Correctional Facility who claims that because Sheriff's Deputies and medical staff failed to properly treat and monitor him during his incarceration, he suffered a seizure and a significant brain injury in May 2012.</p> <p>Given the risks and uncertainties of litigation, a reasonable settlement at this time will avoid further litigation costs; therefore, a full and final settlement of the case in the amount of \$5,900,000 is recommended.</p>
PAID ATTORNEY FEES, TO DATE	\$ 484,188
PAID COSTS, TO DATE	\$ 269,588

Case Name:

Garza, Juan v. County of Los Angeles

County of Los Angeles
Summary Corrective Action Plan

Summary Corrective Action Plan

The intent of this form is to assist departments in writing a corrective action plan summary for attachment to the settlement documents developed for the Board of Supervisors and/or the County of Los Angeles Claims Board. The summary should be a specific overview of the claims/lawsuits' identified root causes and corrective actions (status, time frame, and responsible party). This summary does not replace the Corrective Action Plan form. If there is a question related to confidentiality, please consult County Counsel.

Date of incident/event:	May 15, 2012
Briefly provide a description of the incident/event:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Mental Health Clinical Supervisor recommended moving Inmate Garza into a single man cell because of his suicidal ideations, but the Supervisor did not see any signs of medical emergency. He was handcuffed and walked on his own accord to E-POD cell 6, 172 HOH. An inmate in the day room told deputies that Inmate Garza was standing on his desk in his cell, falling backwards and hitting his head. He repeated this action 4-6 times. NOTE: it is unknown the exact time Inmate Garza entered the cell, because there was no CCTV in 2012. Within two hours Inmate Garza was found "man down" in his cell from self inflicted injuries, and unresponsive.

1. Briefly describe the root cause(s) of the claim/lawsuit:

The primary **Department** root cause in this incident involved the lack of an "Inmate Safety Check" relating to the deputies responsibility to call for medical staff when and inmate is man down. In this case the deputy called for Mental Health staff only.

The secondary **Department** root cause in this incident involved the lack of CCTV camera's to capture the incidents of Inmate Garza harming himself and attempting suicide on the stair railing.

Case Name:Garza, Juan v. County of Los Angeles

County of Los Angeles

Summary Corrective Action Plan

2. Briefly describe recommended corrective actions:

(Include each corrective action, due date, responsible party, and any disciplinary actions if appropriate)

1. Revision of the "Inmate Safety Checks" policy
2. Installation of Security Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Cameras

Camera Installation Completed on August 11, 2014

Number of Cameras Installed in total: 750

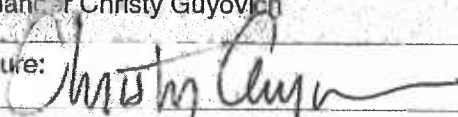
Number of Cameras Operational and Recording: 750

Responsible person: Assistant Sheriff Kelly Harrington

Case Name:

Garza, Juan v. County of Los Angeles

County of Los Angeles
Summary Corrective Action Plan

Name: (Risk Management Coordinator) Commander Christy Guyovich	
Signature: 	Date: 11-2-17

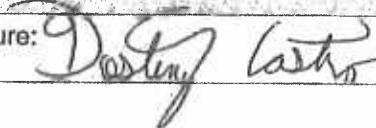
Name: (Department Head) Chief Stephen B. Johnson	
Signature: 	Date: 11/2/17

Chief Executive Office Risk Management Inspector General USE ONLY

Are the corrective actions applicable to other departments within the County?

Yes, the corrective actions potentially have County-wide applicability.

No, the corrective actions are applicable only to this department.

Name: (Risk Management Inspector General) CEO Destiny Castro	
Signature: 	Date: 11/2/2017

Case Name: Juan Isaac Garza



Summary Corrective Action Plan

The intent of this form is to assist departments in writing a corrective action plan summary for attachment to the settlement documents developed for the Board of Supervisors and/or the County of Los Angeles Claims Board. The summary should be a specific overview of the claims/lawsuits' identified root causes and corrective actions (status, time frame, and responsible party). This summary does not replace the Corrective Action Plan form. If there is a question related to confidentiality, please consult County Counsel.

Date of incident/event:	May 15, 2012
Briefly provide a description of the incident/event:	<p>Mr. Juan Isaac Garza, a 22 year-old male at the time of this event, was incarcerated for attempted murder on May 9, 2012. In the Reception Center on May 10, 2012, he answered negatively to the 15-question screening related to mental health issues. The Department of Mental Health Information System showed one past episode of treatment in 2009 with a diagnosis of Schizophrenia, but with no follow-up or medications.</p> <p>On May 15, 2012, Ellen Wong, a Jail Mental Health (JMH) Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Jail Mental Evaluation Team (JMET) supervisor, was asked to assess Mr. Garza while he was waiting to be moved into a double-man cell on 162. According to Ms. Wong, she was told by an inmate that he had fallen but she said that she did not witness the fall. She also felt that his mental status examination was the same as the previous day and that he had no evidence of injury. Ms. Wong requested that Custody move Mr. Garza back to the single-man housing area after this incident in order to secure his safety. Later that morning, he was found "man down" on the cell floor and unresponsive. A nursing note indicated that he appeared post-ictal with trauma and abrasions to his face, and had left periorbital swelling. Mr. Garza was sent to the Los Angeles County Medical Center where he was found to have a subdural hematoma requiring a hemi-craniotomy.</p>

1. Briefly describe the root cause(s) of the claim/lawsuit:

- A. At the time of the event, there was no system, i.e., policy, procedure or training on when and how to interview an inmate who is lying on the floor, and how to determine the need for a medical evaluation for such an individual.
- B. The JMH clinician's documentation did not include detailed information regarding the timeline of events or the rationale for her decisions.

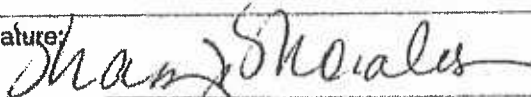
2. Briefly describe recommended corrective actions:
(Include each corrective action, due date, responsible party, and any disciplinary actions if appropriate)

- A.1. On February 4, 2016, the revised JMH Treatment Program Policy, 70.2.1, was signed and requires specific procedures to use for inmates who are lying on the floor when approached for evaluation, and when to refer such inmates for a medical evaluation.
- A.2. On April 16, 2016, an email notification regarding the revisions was sent to all staff.

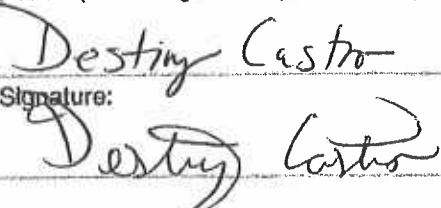
- B1. On June 20, 2012, the employee's supervisor held a discussion with the employee regarding documenting more detailed information of the timeline of events in the future.
- B2. On April 16, 2016, an e-mail notification was sent to all JMH staff regarding justifying a decision for the transfer of an inmate.
- B3. On May 9, 2016, the development of a guideline for enhanced documentation was presented to the Quality Management Committee for implementation.
- B4. JMH, now Correctional Health Services as of July 1, 2016, has engaged in the revision and consolidation of the Medical and Mental Health Policy and Procedure manuals into a single set of Policies and Procedures. One of the initial policies, M211.01, addresses the timeliness of documentation. All documentation will now need to be completed by the end of that work shift.

3. Are the corrective actions addressing department-wide system issues?

- Yes – The corrective actions address department-wide system issues.
- No – The corrective actions are only applicable to the affected parties.

Name: (Risk Management Coordinator) Margo Morales	
Signature: 	Date: 12/27/16

Name: (Department Head) Jonathan Sherin, M.D., Ph.D.	
Signature: 	Date: 1/3/17

Chief Executive Office Risk Management Inspector General USE ONLY	
Are the corrective actions applicable to other departments within the County?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the corrective actions potentially have County-wide applicability.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, the corrective actions are applicable only to this department.	
Name: (Risk Management Inspector General)	
Signature: 	Date: 1/9/2016