



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

CLAIMS BOARD

500 WEST TEMPLE STREET
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012-2713

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Arlene Barrera
Auditor-Controller
Steve Robles
Chief Executive Office
Adrienne M. Byers
Office of the County Counsel

NOTICE OF MEETING

The County of Los Angeles Claims Board will hold a regular meeting on **Monday, June 3, 2019 at 9:30 a.m.**, in the Executive Conference Room, 648 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Los Angeles, California.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order.
2. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Claims Board on items of interest that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Claims Board.
3. Closed Session – Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation (Subdivision (a) of Government Code Section 54956.9).

- a. Hilda Ahmadian, et al. v. State of California, et al.
Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC 510 119

This dangerous condition lawsuit arises due to injuries plaintiffs suffered after a gazebo structure collapse at Castaic Lake State Recreation area; settlement is recommended in the amount of \$1,950,000.

See Supporting Documents

- b. Fabian Rivera, et al. v. County of Los Angeles, et al.
United States District Court Case No. CV18-2180

This lawsuit alleges plaintiffs' constitutional rights were violated when the Department of Children and Family Services removed the minor children from his custody without a warrant; settlement is recommended in the amount of \$125,000.

See Supporting Document

- c. Riva Higgins v. County of Los Angeles, et al.
Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC 618 519

This medical malpractice lawsuit arises from injuries allegedly suffered after Plaintiff underwent a procedure at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center; settlement is recommended in the amount of \$175,000.

[See Supporting Document](#)

- d. Edelia Aleman, et al. v. County of Los Angeles
Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC 611 276

This medical malpractice lawsuit is brought by the surviving family whose father died after a complicated course of hospitalization; settlement is recommended in the amount of \$375,000.

[See Supporting Document](#)

4. Report of actions taken in Closed Session.
5. Approval of the minutes of the May 20, 2019, regular meeting of the Claims Board.

[See Supporting Document](#)

6. Items not on the posted agenda, to be referred to staff or placed on the agenda for action at a further meeting of the Board, or matters requiring immediate action because of emergency situation or where the need to take immediate action came to the attention of the Board subsequent to the posting of the agenda.
7. Adjournment.

CASE SUMMARY

INFORMATION ON PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF LITIGATION

CASE NAME	Hilda Ahmadian, et al. v. State of California, et al.
CASE NUMBER	BC510119
COURT	Los Angeles Superior Court
DATE FILED	May 30, 2013
COUNTY DEPARTMENT	Department of Parks and Recreation
PROPOSED SETTLEMENT AMOUNT	\$ 1,950,000
ATTORNEY FOR PLAINTIFF	Michael Alder, ALDERLAW, PC Cameron Brock, Law Office of Burg & Brock Konrad Kuentsler, Samiratan Law Group
COUNTY COUNSEL ATTORNEY	Richard K. Kudo Principal Deputy County Counsel
NATURE OF CASE	On April 1, 2012, in the afternoon between 12:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m., due to winds gusting at approximately 55 miles-per-hour, a gazebo (the "Gazebo") at the Squirrel Hollow picnic area of Castaic Lake Recreation Area (the "Park") collapsed and allegedly injured 24 Plaintiffs who were under or near the Gazebo celebrating the Persian New Year. The Park is owned by the State of California, but is operated and maintained by the County's Department of Parks and Recreation. The Plaintiffs claim various types of injuries ranging from bone fractures to psychological trauma. Due to the risks and uncertainties of litigation, a full and final settlement of the case is warranted.
PAID ATTORNEY FEES, TO DATE	\$ 438,811
PAID COSTS, TO DATE	\$ 240,467

Case Name:

Hilda Ahmadian, v. County of Los Angeles, et al.



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.

Incident/Event Specific Information

Date of Incident/Event:	April 1, 2012
Briefly provide a description of the incident/event:	A group of 26 patrons allege they were injured when high winds caused the collapse of the wooden picnic shelter at the Castaic Lake, Squirrel Hollow picnic area (32113 Castaic Lake Drive, Castaic Lake, CA). The patrons were underneath the picnic shelter when it collapsed.

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

- Root Cause 1: The picnic shelter was not in conformity with its original design.
- Root Cause 2: The picnic shelter was at such an advanced age and so weathered that it was no longer able to withstand extreme weather conditions such as high wind.
- Root Cause 3: A lack of departmental picnic shelter observations contributed to the potentially compromised structures.
- Root Cause 4: A lack of formal repair/replace procedures contributed to the potentially compromised structures.

2. Briefly describe recommended corrective actions:

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

Root cause 1: Repairs, remediation or replacement of any structural components of picnic shelters will not be executed without first consulting with qualified personnel in the Department's Planning and Development agency.

Root cause 2: At risk shelters were identified by field staff and referred to Planning and Development for further review. Shelters that were identified as at risk due to the potential of collapse were removed.

Root cause 3: Picnic structures in the Department will be observed on an annual basis. Any structures deemed too old or unsafe will be removed or replaced.

Root cause 4: The Department will seek funding to hire licensed Deputy Inspectors to oversee a Department-wide park and picnic shelter inspection, remediation and risk mitigation program.

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)

Donald Limbrick

Signature

Date:

Name: (Department Head)

John Wicker

Signature

Chief Executive Office Risk Management Inspector General USE ONLY

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 Inspector General)

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CASE SUMMARY

INFORMATION ON PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF LITIGATION

CASE NAME	Fabian Rivera, et al. v. County of Los Angeles, et al.
CASE NUMBER	CV18-2180 ODW (AGRx)
COURT	United States District Court
DATE FILED	December 5, 2017
COUNTY DEPARTMENT	Department of Children and Family Services
PROPOSED SETTLEMENT AMOUNT	\$ 125,000
ATTORNEY FOR PLAINTIFF	McNulty Law Firm
COUNTY COUNSEL ATTORNEY	Armita Radjabian, Esq., Deputy County Counsel Jill Williams, Esq., Carpenter, Rothans and Dumont
NATURE OF CASE	Plaintiffs filed this action for an alleged violation of their constitutional rights arising from the warrantless detention of F.R. and J.R. Given the high risks and uncertainties of litigation, a reasonable settlement at this time will avoid further litigation costs. Therefore, a full and final settlement of the cases in the amount of \$125,000 is recommended.
PAID ATTORNEY FEES, TO DATE	\$ \$20,615
PAID COSTS, TO DATE	\$ \$3,570

CASE SUMMARY

INFORMATION ON PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF LITIGATION

CASE NAME	Riva Higgins v. County of Los Angeles, et al.
CASE NUMBER	BC618519
COURT	Los Angeles Superior Court
DATE FILED	April 28, 2016
COUNTY DEPARTMENT	Department of Health Services
PROPOSED SETTLEMENT AMOUNT	\$ 175,000
ATTORNEY FOR PLAINTIFF	Ronald I. Goldszer, Esq. Law Offices of Silverman and Goldszer
COUNTY COUNSEL ATTORNEY	Narbeh Bagdasarian Principal Deputy County Counsel
NATURE OF CASE	<p>On April 30, 2015, Riva Higgins, a 49-year-old female, underwent a hysterectomy procedure at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. During the procedure, a sponge was used to stabilize organs around the surgical site. The sponge caused inflammation and infection and needed to be removed approximately four weeks after the procedure.</p> <p>Ms. Higgins filed a lawsuit against the County of Los Angeles alleging that the providers were negligent in performing the April 30, 2015 surgery.</p>
PAID ATTORNEY FEES, TO DATE	\$ 41,702
PAID COSTS, TO DATE	\$ 15,394

CASE SUMMARY

INFORMATION ON PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF LITIGATION

CASE NAME	Edelia Aleman, et al. v. County of Los Angeles, et al.
CASE NUMBER	BC611276
COURT	Los Angeles Superior Court
DATE FILED	March 10, 2016
COUNTY DEPARTMENT	Department of Health Services
PROPOSED SETTLEMENT AMOUNT	\$ 375,000
ATTORNEY FOR PLAINTIFF	Neil M. Howard, Esq. Law Office of Neil M. Howard
COUNTY COUNSEL ATTORNEY	Narbeh Bagdasarian Principal Deputy County Counsel
NATURE OF CASE	<p>On July 13, 2015, Israel Loeza, a 43-year-old male who had a kidney transplant 10 years earlier, presented to LAC+USC Medical Center with kidney failure. Mr. Loeza's course of hospitalization became complicated with bleeding and infection. He died on August 9, 2015.</p> <p>Mr. Loeza's family filed a wrongful death lawsuit against the County of Los Angeles alleging that the care provided by LAC+USC Medical Center's physicians was negligent and contributed to Mr. Loeza's death.</p>
PAID ATTORNEY FEES, TO DATE	\$ 137,855
PAID COSTS, TO DATE	\$ 71,748

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES CLAIMS BOARD

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

May 20, 2019

1. Call to Order.

This meeting of the County of Los Angeles Claims Board was called to order at 9:56 a.m. The meeting was held in the Executive Conference Room, 648 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Los Angeles, California.

Claims Board Members present at the meeting were: Chair Steve Robles, Arlene Barrera and Adrienne Byers.

Other persons in attendance at the meeting were: Office of the County Counsel: Yuan Chang, Eduardo Montelongo, Millicent Rolon, Mahdi Mohamed, and Pirjo Ranasinghe; Department of Public Works: Dominic Osmena; Office of the District Attorney: Julie Dixon Silva; Sheriff Department: Cynthia Dolson, April Tardy, Kevin Percy, Reginald Louie, Scott Johnson, Esmerelda Lopez, Sergio Escobedo, Timothy Murakami, Mark Allen, Larry Alva, Christopher Reed and Salvador Becerra; Outside Counsel: Tom Hurrell, and Paul Beach.

2. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Claims Board on items of interest within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Claims Board.

One member of the public indicated an intent to address the Claims Board and completed a speaker card, but left prior to the public session and did not return.

3. Closed Session – Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation (Subdivision (a) of Government Code section 54956.9)

At 9:56 a.m., the Chairperson adjourned the meeting into Closed Session to discuss the items listed as 4(a) through 4(h) below.

4. Report of actions taken in Closed Session.

At 11:05 a.m., the Claims Board reconvened in open session and reported the actions taken in Closed Session as follows:

**a. Mary R. Burns v. County of Los Angeles
Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC 655 433**

This dangerous condition lawsuit arises from an alleged trip and fall on a displaced section of a walkway at the County-owned Lomita Administrative Center.

Action Taken:

The Claims Board recommended to the Board of Supervisors the settlement of this matter in the amount of \$150,000.

Vote: Ayes: 3 – Steve Robles, Arlene Barrera, and Adrienne Byers

b. Claim of Karen Nishita

This claim concerns allegations that an employee from the Office of the District Attorney was subjected to sexual harassment.

Action Taken:

The Claims Board recommended to the Board of Supervisors the settlement of this matter in the amount of \$300,000.

Vote: Ayes: 3 – Steve Robles, Arlene Barrera, and Adrienne Byers

**c. Durrell Canty v. County of Los Angeles, et al.
Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC 671 791**

This lawsuit arises from damages and injuries allegedly sustained in a motor vehicle accident involving a Sheriff's Department Deputy.

Action Taken:

The Claims Board approved the settlement of this matter in the amount of \$60,000.

Vote: Ayes: 3 – Steve Robles, Arlene Barrera, and Adrienne Byers

**d. Jane Doe v. County of Los Angeles, et al.
Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC 663 829**

This lawsuit concerns allegations of violation of Plaintiff's right to privacy by the Sheriff's Department.

Action Taken:

The Claims Board recommended to the Board of Supervisors the settlement of this matter in the amount of \$376,000.

Vote: Ayes: 3 – Steve Robles, Arlene Barrera, and Adrienne Byers

**e. John Doe v. County of Los Angeles, et al.
Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC 664 140**

This lawsuit concerns allegations that an employee of the Sheriff's Department was subjected to retaliation and adverse employment actions.

Action Taken:

The Claims Board approved the settlement of this matter in the amount of \$99,000.

Vote: Ayes: 3 – Steve Robles, Arlene Barrera, and Adrienne Byers

f. **Danah Merrick v. County of Los Angeles, et al.**
Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC 674 277

This lawsuit concerns allegations that an employee from the Sheriff's Department was subjected to sexual harassment and sexual assault.

Action Taken:

The Claims Board recommended to the Board of Supervisors the settlement of this matter in the amount of \$1,000,000.

Vote: Ayes: 3 – Steve Robles, Arlene Barrera, and Adrienne Byers

g. **Gladys Sandoval v. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, et al.**
Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC 652 404

This lawsuit concerns allegations that an employee from the Sheriff's Department was subjected to discrimination, retaliation, harassment, and failure to accommodate disabilities.

Action Taken:

The Claims Board approved the settlement of this matter in the amount of \$50,000.

Vote: Ayes: 3 – Steve Robles, Arlene Barrera, and Adrienne Byers

h. **Bradley Brody v. County of Los Angeles, et al.**
Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC 508 614

This lawsuit concerns allegations that an employee from the Sheriff's Department was subjected to retaliation, disability discrimination, harassment, failure to accommodate and denial of a promotion.

Action Taken:

The Claims Board approved the settlement of this matter in the amount of \$95,000.

Vote: Ayes: 3 – Steve Robles, Arlene Barrera, and Adrienne Byers

5. **Approval of the minutes of the May 6, 2019, regular meeting of the Claims Board.**

Action Taken:

The Claims Board approved the minutes.

Vote: Ayes: 2 – Steve Robles and Adrienne Byers
Abstaining: Arlene Barrera

6. **Items not on the posted agenda, to be referred to staff or placed on the agenda for action at a further meeting of the Board, or matters requiring immediate action because of emergency situation or where the need to take immediate action came to the attention of the Board subsequent to the posting of the agenda.**

No such matters were discussed.

7. **Adjournment.**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES CLAIMS BOARD

By



Derek Stane