

Policies and Trainings Surrounding First Responder Photographs

On August 24, 2022, a jury reached a verdict ordering Los Angeles County (County) to pay \$30 million to Vanessa Bryant and Chris Chester for the failure of the County Fire Department and Sheriff’s Department to have adequate policies and practices in place to prevent the taking and sharing of photos. Bryant and Chester’s spouses and daughters were tragically killed in a helicopter crash in January, 2020.

After eleven days of trial and testimonies from more than ten witnesses, the jury decided that neither the Fire nor Sheriff’s Department had adequate policies and/or training in place that would prevent such a violation from occurring. In the aftermath of this public trial and massive verdict, it is important that the County review Fire Department and Sheriff’s Department policies and training to prevent this type of conduct from ever occurring again.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct County Counsel, in consultation with the Fire Department and the Sheriff’s Department, to provide a confidential report back in 45 days with an analysis of, and any recommendations for,

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policies and training procedures that address the proper conduct of first responders regarding photographs of human remains in the course of their duties as first responders.

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JH:kc