



County of Los Angeles

March 4, 2025

Dawyn R. Harrison
County Counsel

Board of Supervisors

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Supervisor, Second District

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Supervisor, Third District

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Supervisor, Fourth District

Kathryn Barger
Supervisor, Fifth District

TO: EDWARD YEN
Executive Officer
Board of Supervisors

FROM: TIMOTHY J. KRAL 
Acting Assistant County Counsel
Justice and Safety Division

RE: **Item for the Board of Supervisors' Agenda
County Contract Cities Liability Trust Fund
Claims Board Recommendation
Dorantes Reyna, Sonia vs. County of Los Angeles, et al.
Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 22STCV05955**



Attached is the Agenda entry for the Los Angeles County Contract Cities Liability Trust Fund Claims Board's recommendation in the above-referenced matter. Also attached is the Case Summary and the Summary Corrective Action Plan for the case.

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

TJK:sr

Attachment

Board Agenda

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS

Settlement for Matter Entitled Dorantes Reyna, Sonia vs. County of Los Angeles, et al. Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 22STCV05955.

Los Angeles County Contract Cities Liability Trust Fund Claims Board's recommendation: Authorized Settlement of the matter entitled **Dorantes Reyna, Sonia vs. County of Los Angeles, et al. Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 22STCV05955** in the amount of \$500,000 and instruct the Auditor-Controller to draw a warrant to implement this settlement from the Sheriff's Department Contract Cities Trust Fund's budget.

This lawsuit concerns allegations of an automobile accident involving a Sheriff's Deputy.

CASE SUMMARY

INFORMATION ON PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF LITIGATION

CASE NAME	Sonia Dorantes Reyna vs. County of Los Angeles, et al.
CASE NUMBER	22STCV05955
COURT	Los Angeles Superior Court
DATE FILED	February 16, 2022
COUNTY DEPARTMENT	Sheriff's Department
PROPOSED SETTLEMENT AMOUNT	\$ 500,000
ATTORNEY FOR PLAINTIFF	Robert S. Fink, Esq. Law Offices of Robert S. Fink
COUNTY COUNSEL ATTORNEY	Melissa A. McCaverty Deputy County Counsel
NATURE OF CASE	<p>This case arises from a traffic collision that occurred involving Plaintiff Sonia Dorantes Reyna and Los Angeles Sheriff's Department Deputy Sue Ann Abad.</p> <p>Given the risks and uncertainties of litigation, a full and final settlement of the case in the amount of \$500,000 is warranted.</p>
PAID ATTORNEY FEES, TO DATE	\$ 10,474
PAID COSTS, TO DATE	\$ 21,147



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:	April 13, 2021, Approximately 4:46 p.m.
Briefly provide a description of the incident/event:	<p style="text-align: center;">Summary Corrective Action Plan 2023-158</p> <p>Details provided in this document summarize the incident. The information provided is a culmination of various sources to provide an abstract of the incident.</p> <p>Multiple investigative reports indicate on April 13, 2021, at approximately 4:46 p.m., an on-duty Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Deputy Sheriff assigned to patrol was driving westbound along a roadway in a marked patrol vehicle. As the Deputy Sheriff prepared to turn southbound, she collided with the Plaintiff who was driving eastbound on the roadway. The weather was clear and there were no visual obstructions.</p> <p>The Plaintiff was driving her vehicle eastbound in the number one lane. The Plaintiff estimated her speed to be approximately 35-45 miles per hour. As the Plaintiff approached the intersection, she saw the Deputy Sheriff's vehicle turn left in front of her; but was unable to avoid a collision.</p> <p>The force of the collision caused the Deputy Sheriff's vehicle to spin out of control and collide with a second vehicle which was stopped northbound in the number one on street, south of the intersection.</p> <p>The Los Angeles County Fire Department responded to the location and transported the Plaintiff to a hospital for medical treatment.</p> <p>The Deputy Sheriff was also transported to a hospital for medical treatment.</p> <p>The driver of the third vehicle was not injured in the collision.</p> <p>A Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department sergeant was notified of the traffic collision and responded to the location. The sergeant authored a Supervisor's Report of Incident or Damage to County Vehicle.</p> <p>The Deputy Sheriff's patrol vehicle, as well as the vehicle occupied by the Plaintiff, sustained major damage.</p> <p>The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Sergeant determined the cause of the traffic collision was the Deputy Sheriff made an unsafe lefthand turn, a violation of California Vehicle Code Section 21801(a). The investigation also determined the Plaintiff was traveling at an unsafe speed (a contributing factor), a violation of California Vehicle Code Section 22350.</p>

	<p>Deputy One's Statement is based on the traffic collision report:</p> <p>The Deputy Sheriff stated she was traveling westbound along the roadway when the collision occurred. She stopped in the left turn lane and cleared the intersection. When she believed it was safe, she proceeded to make a left turn when she was struck by the Plaintiff's vehicle.</p> <p>The airbags in the Deputy Sheriff's vehicle deployed, and she remembered hitting her head hard. Once her vehicle stopped spinning, the Deputy Sheriff exited her vehicle and utilized her Department-issued handheld radio to call for help.</p>
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1. Briefly describe the **root cause(s)** of the claim/lawsuit:

<p>A Department root cause in this incident was the Deputy Sheriff made an unsafe lefthand turn, a violation of California Vehicle Code section 21801(a).</p> <p>A non-Department root cause in this incident was the Plaintiff was traveling at an unsafe speed (a contributing factor in the collision), a violation of California Vehicle Code section 22350.</p>

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

<p>Traffic Collision Investigation</p> <p>The incident was thoroughly investigated by representatives from Cerritos Station. The collision investigation concluded the Deputy Sheriff failed to yield to all traffic traveling in the opposite direction, and not initiate or continue a turn until such traffic is a safe enough distance away to negotiate the turn, a violation of California Vehicle Code section 21801(a).</p> <p>Supervisor's Report of Incident or Damage to County Vehicle</p> <p>The incident was investigated by a representative of Cerritos Station to determine if any administrative misconduct contributed to the traffic collision. The results of the investigation were presented for Department executive adjudication. Appropriate administrative action was taken.</p> <p>Traffic Collision Assessment and Review</p> <p>The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Station conducted a review and assessment of all traffic collisions for the calendar year 2019 through the end of 2023. Personnel who have been involved in more than one traffic collision are directed to attend Department training, such as the Sheriff's Traffic Accident Reduction driving program, Emergency Vehicle Operations, and the Alternatives to Discipline Driving Course.</p> <p>The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Station conducted a review and assessment of all traffic collisions for the calendar year 2019 through the end of 2023. The audit revealed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 48 Preventable collisions occurred during the past five years.• 32 Non-Preventable collisions occurred during the past five years. <p>Personnel who have been involved in more than one traffic collision are directed to attend Department training, such as the Sheriff's Traffic Accident Reduction driving program, Emergency Vehicle Operations, and the Alternatives to Discipline Driving Course</p>

Emergency Vehicle Operation Course – Department Expanded Briefing

In hopes of further mitigating financial liability to the Department as a result of traffic collisions, representatives from Risk Management Bureau briefed the participants of Emergency Vehicle Operations Courses (EVOOC) on current trends as they pertain to Department driving practices.

Department-Wide Broadcast Announcements–Sheriff's Communication Center (SCC)


In hopes of mitigating the Department's traffic collisions, Risk Management has partnered with SCC to create Department-Wide announcements.

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.

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

Name: (Risk Management Coordinator) Julia M. Valdés, A/Captain Risk Management Bureau	
Signature: 	Date: 10/24/2024

Name: (Department Head) Myron Johnson, Assistant Sheriff Patrol Operations	
Signature: 	Date: 12/4/24

Chief Executive Office Risk Management Inspector General USE ONLY	
Are the corrective actions applicable to other departments within the County?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, the corrective actions potentially have County-wide applicability. <input type="checkbox"/> No, the corrective actions are applicable only to this Department.	

Name: Betty Karmirlian (Risk Management Inspector General)	
Signature: 	Date: 12/5/2024