

REVISED

AGN. NO. _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS LINDSEY P. HORVATH

December 2, 2025

AND JANICE HAHN

Affirming the County's Commitment to Transparency in Legal Settlements

On October 14, 2025, it was publicly reported that the County entered into a \$2 million settlement agreement¹ with a department executive.² Similar payments have been made to other County executives upon their departure from County service.

The most recent settlement between the County and a department executive was only disclosed in response to a California Public Records Act request. The settlement did not go through the County's typical Claims Board process, and while it was agendized for closed session discussion and approved by the Board, it is not at all clear how the public generally would have any idea that a settlement was reached.

¹ <https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/26185037/la-county-ceo-settlement-agreement-for-2-million-dollars.pdf> (Oct. 9, 2025 Letter from County Counsel to N. Gerda).

² <https://laist.com/news/politics/county-settlement-ceo>; <https://laist.com/news/la-countys-ceo-payout-ballot-measure-g>; <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-10-14/los-angeles-county-chief-executive-settlement>

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Currently, the County's disclosure process for settlements of the type publicly reported on October 14, 2025 and which are authorized in closed session is to make such settlement materials available upon request after the settlement becomes final and is executed by all parties. This process complies with state law and is consistent with other local jurisdictions' practices.

While some information must remain confidential due to attorney-client privilege, and other non-disclosure laws, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), this Board can do more to make the public aware of how the Board conducts business and how public funds are being spent. The Board has intentionally acted to make increasing amounts of information public. For example, the Board annually releases a litigation cost summary,³ and the Auditor-Controller makes public a wide variety of information regarding audit and financial reports.⁴ Furthermore, our County departments are increasingly working to make data dashboards available to the public on a variety of data points of interest to this Board and the public. Those efforts are a part of our ongoing efforts to move towards best practices of transparency and accountability, and the same can and should be done, regarding settlements with executives.

WEI, THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the County Counsel to issue a written report back to the Board in 30 days with a description of any laws, policies, and practices, governing the disclosure of settlements with County executives.

³ <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/199629.pdf>

⁴ <https://auditor.lacounty.gov/>

2. Direct the County Counsel to work with the Executive Office of the Board to develop, within 60 days, appropriate language to be used prospectively to publicly disclose any reportable action taken in closed session related to any settlements with County executives, as defined in California Government Code Section 3511.1., subdivision (d), as soon as possible after any such settlement becomes final.
3. Direct County Counsel to include in the language of any settlement agreement with any County executive, as defined in California Government Code Section 3511.1., subdivision (d), an explicit provision that the existence of the underlying settlement agreement will be disclosed pursuant to the language identified in Directive 2, to the maximum extent permitted by law.
4. Direct the County Counsel, in consultation with the Auditor-Controller, to report back in 60 days on pathways to improve transparency for settlements with County executives, as defined in California Government Code Section 3511.1., subdivision (d). The report back should address the potential creation of a publicly-accessible dashboard to be hosted on the Auditor-Controller's website that will publish as much settlement-related information as permitted, including details such as the name of the County executive, the amount of the settlement, whether the settlement went before the Claims Board, and the dates on which it was approved by the Claims Board and/or Board of Supervisors.

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