



Health Services
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

May 19, 2026



Health Services
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Los Angeles County
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*"To advance the health of our patient
and our communities by providing
extraordinary care"*

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**APPROVAL TO PROVIDE LEGAL REPRESENTATION AND PAYMENT OF
INVESTIGATIVE COSTS FOR PHYSICIAN NAMED IN MEDICAL BOARD
OF CALIFORNIA ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDING FOR AMBULATORY
CARE NETWORK
(ALL DISTRICTS) (3 VOTES)**

SUBJECT

Request approval to provide legal representation and pay costs of investigation for a licensed physician (the "Physician-Employee") employed by the Department of Health Services ("DHS"), Ambulatory Care Network ("ACN"), named in an investigation conducted by the Medical Board of California ("MBC"). The notice of violation and imposition of costs ("Notification") issued by the MBC involved actions that occurred in the course and scope of employment of the DHS Physician-Employee.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Make a finding, pursuant to Government Code section 995.6 that the DHS Physician-Employee, as described below, acted in good faith and without malice in the apparent interests of the County of Los Angeles (the "County");
2. Approve the provision of legal representation for the Physician-Employee and authorize payment of the attorney's fees and costs incurred in this proceeding initiated before the MBC, at the County's expense; and
3. Approve payment by DHS, or reimbursement of the Physician-Employee for payment, of investigative costs as described in the Notification, in an amount not to exceed \$8,000, for full and final settlement of the MBC administrative proceeding against the Physician-Employee.



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PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approval of the first recommendation is necessary to exercise the County's option, under Government Code Section 995.6, to provide for the legal representation for an administrative investigation brought against a DHS employee.

Approval of the second recommendation will allow continued legal representation for the Physician-Employee who is named in the Notification. The DHS Physician-Employee was individually named based on status as a physician of ACN as is routine and required by law.

Approval of the third recommendation will allow DHS to resolve this matter without a costly administrative hearing and avoid potential administrative fines and penalties of up to \$100,000.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The recommended actions support LA County's Strategic Plan North Star I – Make Investments that Transform Lives, Employment and Sustainable Wages, and North Star 3 – Realize Tomorrow's Government Today, Diverse and Inclusive Workforce, by ensuring that the committed efforts of our staff are recognized and defended when challenged, and pursuing operational effectiveness, fiscal responsibility and accountability.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The costs for providing legal representation will not exceed \$15,000, including anticipated additional legal fees incurred to finalize and close the matter, as this administrative proceeding has involved and will involve time-consuming fact-finding and negotiations. DHS expects to reach a settlement with the MBC in an amount not to exceed \$8,000.

Funding for both expenses is included in the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Final Budget, and there is no net County cost impact associated with the recommendations.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Pursuant to the California Government Code section 995.6, a public entity is not required to provide for the defense of an administrative proceeding brought against a County employee. However, the statute allows that a public entity may provide for such defense if certain, specified findings are made. Those findings include that the acts or omissions of the employee must have occurred in the course and scope of County employment and that the provision of a defense for the employee is in the County's best interests. Further, it must be determined that the employee acted or failed to act, in good faith, without actual malice, and in the apparent interests of the County.

DHS and County Counsel reviewed the employee's actions and determined them to be within the scope of County employment, conducted in good faith, without malice, and in the interests of the County. The Notification describes prescription practices that occurred during the Physician-Employee's employment at ACN. As the DHS Physician-Employee's prescribing practices were on behalf of the ACN, representation of the DHS employee in the administrative proceeding is also

appropriate. DHS believes, given the subject matter of the Notification, the underlying circumstances, roles and responsibilities of the Physician-Employee, that legal representation and payment of the administrative fine are appropriate.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

Not applicable.

CONCLUSION

DHS recommends that the Board of Supervisors (the "Board") find that the DHS Physician-Employee acted in good faith, without malice, and in the apparent interests of the County and that providing for the defense of the Physician-Employee is within the best interests of the County. DHS further recommends that the Board approve and ratify the provision of a legal defense for the Physician-Employee and authorize payment of all attorney's fees and costs incurred and to be incurred for this proceeding, and approve payment of the settlement of this matter in an amount not to exceed \$8,000, at the County's expense.

Respectfully submitted,



Christina R. Ghaly, M.D.

Director

CG:kc

c: Chief Executive Office
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors