



PRISON LAW OFFICE

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Hello:

This letter describes our Riverside jail lawsuit and tells you what we can and cannot do to help. We apologize for sending you this form letter, but in some instances, it is the quickest way for us to communicate. If you are receiving this in response to a letter you sent us, we return any documents that you may have enclosed with your letter and include any informational pamphlets we believe might address the concerns you raise.

We sued the County in *Gray v. County of Riverside* to improve medical and mental health care in the jails and to make the County offer accessible living space to people with physical disabilities. The case is a class action, which means that it covers all people in the jails. If you are in jail in Riverside, you are automatically covered by the lawsuit. If you are experiencing problems in the jail in areas other than medical or mental health care or a physical disability, we cannot help you under the lawsuit.

The County agreed to settle the case, and we worked out a detailed list of steps they must take to improve medical and mental health care and end disability discrimination in certain areas. In 2016, the Court approved the settlement and ordered the County to make the improvements in the Consent Decree and Remedial Plan. Let us know if you want us to send you copies of those documents.

The County has made significant improvements since that time: they have hired many more doctors, nurses, and mental health clinicians, and put many systems in place to improve things like medication delivery. There are still problems, however, so we continue to monitor the County's compliance with the Consent Decree and Remedial Plan. In 2020, we went back to Court to force the County to take additional steps to keep people safe from the COVID-19 epidemic, including limits on the dorm population, sanitation, masks, testing for staff and patients, and other measures. The Court ordered the County to take these steps. Since that time, the COVID-19 plan's provisions have either been incorporated into jail policy or dismissed.

If you are experiencing problems related to conditions at the jail, we advise you to file a kite and/or a grievance. We cannot usually raise problems with jail officials until we first see how the County has responded. If you send us a grievance response, we will take another look to see if we can help. We cannot promise that we can take action, but we always review everything

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people at the jail send to determine if there is anything we can do. We can raise some individual health care problems with the County to try to get them solved, but are generally only able to advocate if (1) you have already filed a grievance and we think our intervention might be helpful or (2) you have an urgent unmet medical or mental health need. An urgent condition is one that might lead to significant injury or death if not quickly and properly treated.

If you are receiving this in response to a letter you sent to us, we have decided we cannot advocate for you under the *Gray* lawsuit at this time. If you have a medical or mental health or disability access problem, please file a grievance and if you are not satisfied with the response, send us a copy (or copy it by hand for us). We will review it to see if we can intervene. We are sorry we can't give you individual help at this time, but we very much hope that the settlement in the *Gray* case will result in much better care for everyone.

Unfortunately, we do not have the resources to represent anyone in the Riverside jails in an individual lawsuit. If you would like to file your own lawsuit about problems in the jail, you should file and “exhaust” a grievance about your problem. That means that you should go through the entire grievance process at the jail to try to resolve your issue. If you would like general information on how to file a lawsuit, please write to us and ask.

You may have heard that the California Attorney General's Office is investigating Riverside County over jail conditions that might have led to an unusual number of deaths in 2022 and 2023. If you wish to provide information to the investigators, you can write to them at:

Office of the Attorney General
Public Inquiry Unit
P.O. Box 944255
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550

We wish you the best.

The Prison Law Office

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