
Sponsor: Board of Commissioners

Meeting Date: 10/1/2024

Title: Settlement Agreement in Orlando Hooper v. Ramsey County
(MDHR File No. 74939)

File Number: 2024-466

Background and Rationale:

Following his detention at the Adult Detention Center from May 24, 2022 to May 28, 2022, Mr. Hooper filed a charge with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR) alleging that the county discriminated against him on the basis of a disability, in violation of the Minnesota Human Rights Act. Specifically, Mr. Hooper alleges that he was not provided with an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter or access to a videophone subject to the same rules and restrictions that are applied to other detainees' use of standard telephones.

The settlement provides payments totaling \$44,000, including:

- 1) \$1,000 to claimant Orlando Hooper;
- 2) \$18,000 to the MMLA Client Trust; and
- 3) \$25,000 to the Minnesota Disability Law Center for attorneys' fees and expenses.

The settlement also obligates Ramsey County to certain commitments during the two-year term of the settlement, including those related to:

- 1) providing interpreter services to ADC detainees;
- 2) creating an ASL version of the ADC Rules/Handbook;
- 3) posting of notices of policies;
- 4) training of ADC staff; and
- 5) providing videophone and video relay services.

The MDHR will monitor the Ramsey County's compliance with these provisions.

The settlement disclaims liability by Ramsey County and provides for full dismissal of the claims and full release of claimant's past and pending claims against Ramsey County.

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Approve the settlement agreement with Orlando Hooper relating to Orlando Hooper v. Ramsey County (MDHR File No. 74939), totaling \$44,000.
2. Authorize the Chair and Chief Clerk to execute the settlement agreement.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Ortega, seconded by Commissioner McGuire.
Motion passed.

Aye: - 6: Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

