

NEWS

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County's anti-corruption efforts exceed \$24.8 million today

The County of San Bernardino today reached a \$450,000 settlement with the ex-wife and daughter of a former county administrative officer convicted on federal bribery charges.

The settlement brings to more than \$24.8 million the amount the county has received in restitution, settlements, judgments, and credits from civil action taken by the county in response to a corruption scandal involving former county officials and contractors. More than \$16.7 million of that sum has come in the form of cash payments to the county.

"Today's settlement brings us much closer to our goal of recovering as much as possible from those who cheated the taxpayers," said San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors Chairman Bill Postmus. "This should send a message that no one will get away with engaging in corruption in San Bernardino County."

Today's settlement stemmed from action the Board of Supervisors took in October 2000 to add Marietta Mays and Krista Henkels as defendants to one of the county's anti-corruption civil lawsuits. The county contended that former CAO Harry Mays, who had been convicted of bribery charges, had attempted to shield some of his assets from the county's civil lawsuit by transferring them to his wife and daughter, and then divorcing his wife.

In addition to the \$450,000, Marietta Mays and Krista Henkels agreed to transfer their interest in a home in Laughlin, Nev., to the county. The value of their interest in the property has not been determined.

The settlement was finalized today as opening arguments were scheduled to begin in the portion of the case involving Ms. Mays and Ms. Henkels in Ventura Superior Court. The court will later conduct the punitive damages portion of the county's anti-corruption lawsuit. The county is also awaiting a final judgment in an earlier portion of the case against Harry Mays, former CAO James Hlawek, and others. The court has issued a tentative ruling in the county's favor.