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Attorney General Bonta Welcomes Court Decision in Case Against Mariner Health Skilled Nursing Facilities

OAKLAND — California Attorney General Bonta today welcomed a decision by the Alameda County Superior Court placing all 19 of the Mariner Health skilled nursing facilities under the review of an independent monitor to ensure compliance with minimum nurse staffing level requirements. The court had previously placed only five of the Mariner facilities under review.

“This ruling is a step towards justice for the residents Mariner left vulnerable to assault, illness, and harm,” **said Attorney General Bonta**. “Nurse staffing is a critical factor that determines the health and safety of patients. Thanks to the hard work of my team and our partners, the court found Mariner had a history of violating the law by understaffing its facilities. With this ruling, all of Mariner’s California skilled nursing facilities can be reviewed by a court-appointed monitor, who will help ensure they are providing the staffing required by law. Let me be clear: My office will not tolerate the mistreatment and abuse of our state’s most vulnerable residents.”

“My office will not tolerate the mistreatment and abuse of our most vulnerable residents,” **said Alameda County District Attorney Pamela Price**. “Five of the nineteen facilities are located within Alameda County and this ruling marks a significant step towards preventing any more patients from being endangered through inadequate staffing.”

“Protecting the elderly and disabled continues to be a priority for our office,” **said Santa Cruz County District Attorney Jeffrey Rosell**. “Skilled nursing facilities need to provide their residents the care that has been

promised, and a critical part of that is providing sufficient staff to maintain the health and well-being of the elderly and disabled.”

“The Court’s decision to extend further protections mandating defendants provide required staffing levels at all its California facilities, including in Marin County, is fair and appropriate,” **said Marin County District Attorney Lori Frugoli**. “We look forward to making permanent all protections required by this injunction after a trial on the merits.”

“Inadequate staffing at skilled nursing facilities leads to a decline in the quality of care provided, which has serious consequences for our vulnerable population,” **said Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascón**. “This is especially true when the coronavirus is still with us. We applaud this Alameda County Superior Court ruling that protects the rights and dignity of our older population by placing all of Mariner’s California skilled nursing facilities under review by a court-appointed monitor. This move may save precious lives.”

The ruling is part of a [preliminary injunction secured by Attorney General Bonta](#) in January, after he and the District Attorneys of Alameda, Los Angeles, Marin, and Santa Cruz counties filed a civil complaint, alleging that Mariner Health violated California’s Unfair Competition Law and False Advertising Law by understaffing its facilities and subjecting its patients to negligent care while inflating their skilled nursing facilities advertised ratings to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Understaffing left residents vulnerable and the inadequate care resulted in unnecessary amputations, the spread of diseases such as lice and pests among residents, and a high number of unreported sexual assault cases, among other issues.

More information on the complaint and Mariner Health’s alleged behavior can be found [here](#).

A copy of the ruling by the Alameda County Superior Court can be found [here](#).

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