



Management
& Training
Corporation

NEWS

MTC joins legal action settlement

Former jail operator will join Santa Fe County in paying class action settlements

July 6, 2006 – **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

(CENTERVILLE, Utah) – Management & Training Corporation (MTC), Santa Fe County and two insurance carriers have agreed today to fund payments to class action claimants, after settling a lawsuit filed over a previous strip-search policy at the Santa Fe County Adult Detention Center. A settlement amount of up to \$5.5 million will be available to qualified claimants.

Strip searches have been a widespread security practice in correctional facilities for decades to deter the introduction of weapons, drugs and other contraband. Strip searches remain an accepted, common and constitutional practice in correctional facilities. In recent years however, some courts have held that jail personnel may perform this type of search only when there is "reasonable suspicion" to believe the person entering the jail may be concealing contraband. "Reasonable suspicion" may be provided by observing inmate behavior, the inmate's history or certain types of criminal charges, such as those involving drugs, weapons or violence.

"The only reason strip-searches were carried out at the Santa Fe County Adult Detention Center was to prevent contraband from entering the facility," said MTC spokesman Carl Stuart. "Management & Training Corporation carried out the strip-search policy under the direction of Santa Fe County and the County Sheriff's Department."

Strip-search litigation has become common across the United States. In recent years, class-action settlements have been reached in California, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, New York, Wisconsin and elsewhere.

"Maintaining a safe and secure correctional facility is always Management & Training Corporation's top priority," Stuart added. "Jail operators face the difficult challenge of balancing strip-search legal restrictions with their need to keep contraband out of the facility in order to maintain a safe environment for staff, visitors and inmates."

Arrestees booked into jails often try to conceal heroin, methamphetamine, marijuana, alcohol, knives, firearms and other contraband. While admitting arrestees, jail staff know very little about them or the security risk they may present. Jailers also have limited time and resources to investigate factors that might support the "reasonable suspicion" analysis.

Strip-search policies at the Santa Fe County Adult Detention Center always required searches to be carried out in privacy and by an officer of the same sex as the arrestee.

For more information on Management & Training Corporation please visit www.mtctrains.com.

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