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## 6,800 child abuse victims to share record LA County payout

**L.A. County's \$4 billion settlement with 6,800 abuse survivors from MacLaren Hall and probation facilities marks a historic apology and reform effort, pending approval.**

By Skyler Romero  
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Los Angeles County reached a tentative \$4 billion settlement with more than 6,800 childhood sexual abuse survivors in what will be the costliest settlement in the county's history if approved, a news release on Friday announced.

"On behalf of the county, I apologize wholeheartedly to everyone who was harmed by these reprehensible acts," County Chief Executive Officer Fesia Davenport said in the release. "The historic scope of this settlement makes clear that we are committed to helping the survivors recover and rebuild their lives - and to making and enforcing the systemic changes needed to keep young people safe."

The settlement will resolve the majority of claims brought by victims who alleged systemic sexual abuse at the MacLaren Children's Center, formerly MacLaren Hall, and various Probation Department facilities dating back to 1959, the release said.

The lead case was filed in 2021 by attorneys with Taylor & Ring in Manhattan Beach under a 2020 amendment to the state's Code of Civil Procedure waiving the statute of limitations and providing a three-year window to file childhood sexual abuse claims. *Jane Doe 1 et al. v. County of Los Angeles*, 21STCV20949 (L.A. Sup. Ct., filed June 3, 2021).

Most of the plaintiffs were represented by attorneys with McNicholas & McNicholas LLP, Becker Law Group, ACTS Law LLP, Boucher LLP and Slater Slater Schulman LLP, according to a news release distributed by plaintiffs' counsel on Friday.

Slater founding partner Adam P. Slater in New York City, New York praised the settlement in a phone call on Friday.

"The historic settlement marks a fundamental acknowledgement by the County of Los Angeles for the profound harm it inflicted on thousands



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of former residents at county-operated juvenile detention facilities, and, of course, MacLaren Hall," Slater said. "Victory is bittersweet, because these people will never be able to have normal lives, but what this settlement hopefully does for them is it gives them some measure of justice."

Attorney Patrick McNicholas in Los Angeles said in the plaintiffs' news release, "This landmark settlement represents restorative justice for victims. Restorative justice is a societal recognition that a horrible wrong has been committed and compensation is justified."

He added that the settlement "stands as a testament to the resilience of survivors, the importance of holding institutions accountable and the power of collaboration in driving meaningful change. By balancing justice for the victims with a commitment to reform, this resolution ensures both acknowledgment of past wrongs and a pathway to a safer, more accountable future."

The settlement funds will be dispersed through annual payments amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars through 2030, the county's news release said. Payments of remaining funds will then be distributed via continuing annual payments through the fiscal year 2050-51.

The payment plan is the result of efforts to balance fair restitution for the survivors with the county's budget restraints, Slater said.

"We worked on structuring a settlement in a way that met that balance to the best possible extent it could," he added.

ACTS Law partner Boris Treyzon in Encino agreed in the plaintiffs' news release.

"The challenge in this case was finding a resolution that fairly compensated the victims without forcing Los Angeles County into bankruptcy," he said. "With the funding plan in place, we are proud to have found a forward-thinking solution that will help victims find closure and prevent long-term financial challenges for Los Angeles County and its residents."

Becker Law senior partner Todd B. Becker explained in the news release, "By structuring the settlement payouts over five years, Los Angeles County has ensured that justice is served in a way that remains fiscally responsible."

"This approach provides survivors with the compensation they deserve while allowing the county to maintain control, manage its financial exposure and meet clear benchmarks along a well-defined timeline," he said. "The settlement also includes critical accountability measures, such as enhanced staff training and stronger oversight, to prevent such failures in the future, reinforcing the county's commitment to meaningful reform."

The settlement is expected to go before the claims board for approval on April 7, the county's release said. If the board approves it, the settlement will then go before the board of supervisors on April 29.

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