



Memorandum  
Office of the County Attorney

OnBase ID #: 110701

March 13, 2025

To: Honorable Members of the  
Board of Acquisition and Contract

From: Stacey Dolgin-Kmetz  
Chief Deputy County Attorney

Re: Request for Authorization to Settle the Lawsuit of Chrishvae D. Christie and Errol K. Nelson-Chambers against Westchester County, Westchester County Bureau of Purchase and Supply, Westchester County Police Department and P.O. Rachel Santiago in the amount of \$150,000.00.

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Attached for your consideration is a resolution which, if approved by your Honorable Board, would authorize settlement of the lawsuit of Chrishvae D. Christie and Errol K. Nelson-Chambers against Westchester County, Westchester County Bureau of Purchase and Supply, Westchester County Police Department and P.O. Rachel Santiago in the amount of \$150,000.00, inclusive of counsel fees.

On or about May 11, 2023, Chrishvae D. Christie and Errol K. Nelson-Chambers (“Plaintiff Christie” and “Plaintiff Chambers”) commenced an action in the Supreme Court, Westchester County against the County of Westchester for personal injuries sustained on February 13, 2022, when their vehicle was struck in the rear by a police vehicle being operated by P.O. Rachel Santiago. Plaintiff Christie was twenty-four at the time of the accident and Plaintiff Chambers was twenty-five at the time of the accident.

On the date of the accident, Plaintiff Christie was driving his husband’s, Plaintiff Chambers, vehicle. Plaintiff Chambers was the passenger in the vehicle. They were driving on the exit ramp of the southbound Saw Mill River Parkway approximately 200 feet west of the entrance to the Cross County Parkway. Plaintiff Christie needed to check the GPS and came to a stop when P.O. Santiago, who was traveling behind the Plaintiffs, rear-ended their vehicle.

In their motion for summary judgment on liability, the Plaintiffs argued that there is an inference of negligence when a vehicle hits another vehicle in the rear when the lead vehicle is at a complete stop. The driver in the rear is expected to have control of his vehicle and to be driving at a reasonable speed and a safe distance from the lead vehicle. In opposition, the County argued that the non-negligent explanation is the sudden stop of the Plaintiff's vehicle. In her Decision, the Judge granted Plaintiff's motion for summary judgment on the issue of liability. The Judge found that the County did not have a non-negligent explanation for the rear-end collision because the driver in the rear should be maintaining a safe distance between his car and the vehicle in front.

As a result of the accident, Plaintiff Christie had one injection in his cervical spine and two injections in his lumbar spine. He also underwent right shoulder surgery. Plaintiff Chambers also underwent surgery on his right shoulder. As such, a jury could reasonably find for the Plaintiffs in an amount of \$250,000 and more. This matter has a reserve of \$500,000.00 with the County's 6-N Fund. It is the recommendation of this office that this matter be settled for \$150,000.00, inclusive of counsel fees.

Plaintiff is represented by Melanie Abrams, Esq. of the Abrams Law Group, 104-70 Queens Blvd., Suite 403, Forest Hills, New York 11375.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 03/27/2015 - RAYMOND SUDUKY, SECRETARY

