

Briefly

Motorcyclists Take \$1.2M Settlement

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously Tuesday to approve a \$1.2 million lawsuit settlement stemming from a collision between a sheriff's patrol car and a motorcycle.

Guadalupe Pedroza, who was driving a motorcycle, and his cousin Saimer Gutierrez, who was a passenger, suffered multiple injuries in the Sept. 17, 1995, collision. *Pedroza v. County of Los Angeles*, VC022925.

Plaintiffs' attorney Gregory W. Moreno said Tuesday his clients decided to settle the case because they believed the county made a fair offer and they did not want to spend years waiting for a trial and for appeals.

"They wanted to put an end to the litigation and go on with their lives," Moreno said.

Pedroza, 35, no longer can work as a roofer because of the hip replacement surgery he had as a result of the collision, his attorney said. Pedroza went back to school and plans to start a new career. Gutierrez, 24, who was visiting from Mexico at the time of the collision, plans to go home and start a business there, Moreno said.

According to a summary of the case from Philip S. Miller, a principal deputy county counsel, and Conrad Kohrs of Kohrs, Fiske & Steur, a private attorney working for the county on the case, Pedroza had a green light as he entered an intersection when a sheriff's patrol vehicle with its lights and siren on entered the same intersection. The patrol car, which went through a red light on its way to respond to an emergency call, collided with the motorcycle.

"We believe a court or jury would find the deputy negligent for entering the intersection against a red light without first determining that his vehicle posed no danger to vehicles legally proceeding through the intersection on a green light," the summary states.

Gutierrez suffered severe head trauma, deep facial cuts and a compound fracture of his left leg. Pedroza's injuries included a fractured pelvis and fractured left ankle.