

LAW & JUSTICE

Civil Rights Repeatedly Violated

State hospital has range of ills

(AP)—The U.S. Department of Justice has found numerous civil rights violations of patients at the Oregon State Hospital.

In a report released Jan. 16, federal investigators listed inadequate conditions and practices at the mental hospital ranging from life-threatening use of restraints to widespread patient-on-patient assault.

Federal law entitles patients to certain standards of care.

State health officials say many improvements have been made since the investigation took place in 2006, but acknowledged prob-

lems still exist.

"The conditions reported ... are completely unacceptable," said Dr. Bruce Goldberg, director of Oregon's Department of Human Services. "It's unacceptable as a state and it's unacceptable for us as a state hospital for the health and well-being of our patients."

The Oregon State Hospital is the state's primary psychiatric facility for adults, which has a main hospital in Salem and other satellite facilities.

Officials found violations in Salem and at its smaller Portland campus, which is used for psychiatric rehabilitation.

Some of the cases highlighted in the 48-page report include:

Nearly 400 cases of patient-

against-patient assault over one year.

Infection control issues such as mice in rooms, deaths from pneumonia and outbreaks of norovirus and scabies.

Patients injuring themselves, including multiple suicide attempts, while under staff observation.

Failure to follow common standards of care: A patient with a disorder that causes excessive thirst was left at the water fountain and gained 13 pounds in water weight in one day.

Patients being put in seclusion indefinitely: One patient had been in seclusion for a year with no other treatment when investigators arrived.

Other issues included improper

medication, failure to diagnose mental health conditions, improper use of restraints, nurses working excessive overtime and patients waiting for discharge for more than a year after being approved.

The report sets out recommended changes but does not set timelines to complete them. It is the latest in a series of critical looks at the hospital. Multiple state-commissioned reports found major health and safety dangers there, primarily from the crumbling century-old facility in Salem.

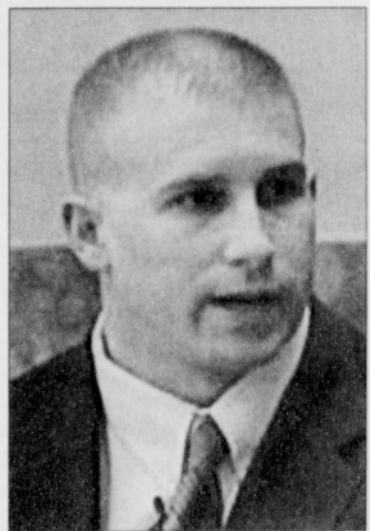
The Oregon Legislature last year authorized \$458 million to build two new state-operated hospitals by 2013, including a 620-bed hospital in Salem and a 360-bed facility in Junction City.

Officer who Killed Unarmed Motorist Hired

For police work in Beaverton

(AP)—A former police officer who fatally shot an unarmed African-American motorist in the St. John's neighborhood of north Portland has been hired by the Beaverton Police Department.

Jason Sery, 32, shot James Jahar Perez three times during a traffic stop in 2004. Sery claimed he saw Perez pull a clenched fist from his right pocket, thinking he was pulling out a gun. A second officer, Sean Macomber, then fired his Taser gun at Perez.



Jason Sery

Sery was cleared of any wrongdoing, but the shooting sparked a public outcry and led Multnomah County District Attorney Michael Schunk to hold a public inquest.

Sery resigned a few months later, saying he had decided to become a teacher. He has taught 11th graders at Southwest Christian School, which is affiliated with Southwest Bible Church, a nondenominational church in Beaverton. He's also worked in the college ministry and other ministries, said Scott Gilchrist, senior pastor.

"We completed an extensive

background investigation before Officer Sery was hired," Chief David Bishop said in a statement. "Based on the background investigation, we determined Officer Sery had been cleared three times of any wrongdoing. His background investigation was probably one of the best of the best."

Elden Rosenthal, the lawyer who representing the family of Perez in a civil rights lawsuit against the city of Portland, said he was surprised Sery has returned to police work. The lawsuit is on hold while the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals considers whether the Police Bureau's use of force policy is constitutional.

'Pastor' Sentenced to Prison for Fraud

Victims taken in real-estate scams

(AP)—A man from Gresham and Sandy who called himself "Pastor Corey" to gain the trust of victims in a real-estate scam was sentenced last week to almost eight years in prison.

Corey J. Pritchett, 44, would use clients' money to remodel and sell houses, promising 30 percent returns. Or he sold or rented homes that he didn't own or manage. He once sold two separate people the same house on the same day.

In all, Pritchett was convicted of 32 counts tied to scamming victims out of an estimated \$43,000 from 2004 to 2006. Prosecutors said he cheated many more victims than the nine cases he was charged with.

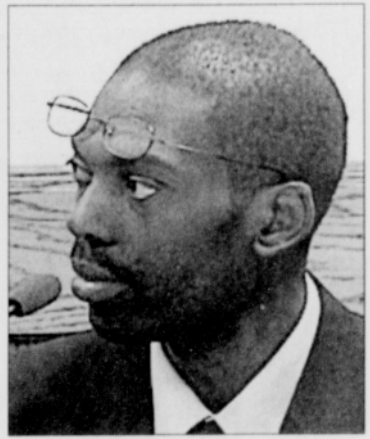
Pritchett will also appear later this month in Clackamas County Circuit Court, where he faces 25 more charges of defrauding people.

The victims repeatedly said they trusted Pritchett because he was a pastor. Investigators, however, said that by the time Pritchett was arrested in May, his congregation had been reduced to his relatives.

Special prosecutor Simon Whang said Pritchett often took advantage of the needy and has 44

civil judgments against him dating back 17 years and owes several hundred thousand dollars.

One victim, a single mother of five, told the judge Pritchett had visited her home and met her children, but took \$1,000 from her any-



Corey Pritchett

way. A few weeks later, she didn't have enough money to buy Christmas presents. Another woman said her family became homeless because of the \$2,000 they gave Pritchett.

Pritchett, who represented himself, maintained his innocence: "At no time did I ... conspire to go out and rip anybody off."

Officer Guilty of Misconduct

A Portland Police officer has pleaded guilty to official misconduct and resigned after an investigation into an inappropriate relationship with a young woman who suffered from mental health problems.

The Portland Police Bureau said that 34-year-old Jason Faulk had an inappropriate sexual relation-

ship with a woman in her mid-20s who called 911 to report that she was being harassed.

Detectives consulted with mental health professionals, the victim's case workers and prosecutors during the investigation. They determined there were no threats or coercion involved. Faulk was a 10-year veteran of the Portland force.

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