

PARENTS OF ONE WHO DIED IN PIERCE COUNTY DETENTION CENTER FILE
FEDERAL LAWSUIT

MH&B filed civil rights claims in federal court against Pierce County, Pierce County Sheriff Paul Pastor, a Lakewood police officer, and several corrections officers on behalf of the parents of James Close who on June 16, 2006 died in custody at the Pierce County Detention and Corrections Center ("PCDCC"). That day, members of a joint federal and local police task force arrested James Close in Sequim, Washington after they learned from James's father that he had bipolar disorder and had attempted suicide six months before. The arresting officers noticed that James was upset while being arrested and wrote in large block letter "SUICIDE WATCH" on the PCDCC booking form. Despite these red flags, PCDCC corrections officers did not have James examined by mental health professionals or placed in a suicide observation cell. Approximately three hours after James was booked, he was found hanging in his cell without a pulse.

See Close v. Pierce County et al, 09cv5023-RJB (Amended Complaint filed Jan. 22, 2009).

For further interest, please refer to recent stories in the local press:

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2008661198_webinmatedeath23.html