

Court Information Release



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District Judge Kendall grants motion ending federal oversight of Cook County Jail

CHICAGO-Ill.- On Friday, June 9, 2017, District Judge Virginia M. Kendall ruled that the Sheriff of Cook County and the Cook County Department of Corrections (CCDOC) were in compliance with a 2010 consent order, granting a motion to dismiss the Sheriff of Cook County and CCDOC from a 2010 civil lawsuit and subsequent consent order, effectively ending federal oversight of CCDOC.

“Going from a consent decree alleging a panoply of ills, of constitutional violations, in seven years, to being a model of how to best run a pretrial facility, that is something to be proud of,” said Judge Kendall in court Friday as she granted the motion.

Judge Kendall, who has overseen the case and consent order since 2010, also complimented the parties for their commitment, professionalism, and creativity in implementing reforms. “That’s inspirational for me as a judge, and it was really a worthwhile practice for me to sit with all of you who made it happen.”

At Friday’s proceedings, the parties highlighted key improvements resulting from the consent order, including the hiring of more than 1,800 correctional officers since 2010, the installation of 2,400 video surveillance cameras, improvements in medical and mental health care programming, and greater transparency.

In 2007, the Department of Justice began an investigation of constitutional conditions of inmates at CCDOC, the largest single-site county jail in the U.S. In 2010, the U.S. Attorney

General filed a civil lawsuit against the Cook County Sheriff, Cook County, and the Cook County Board of Commissioners, alleging constitutional violations of CCDOC inmates' constitutional rights under the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act of 1980, 42. U.S.C. § 1997. On May 26, 2010, the Cook County Sheriff, the Cook County Board of Commissioners, the Department of Justice, and the federal court entered into a consent order that set out measures to ensure the constitutional conditions of inmates at CCDOC.

The consent order called for four court-appointed monitors and covered most aspects of operations at CCDOC facilities including Protection from Harm (use of force, security staffing, inmate grievance procedure, etc.); Medical Care; Mental Health Care; Suicide Prevention; Fire and Life Safety; Sanitation and Environmental Conditions; and Quality Management and Performance Measurement.

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