

EXHIBIT A

E-FILED
THURSTON COUNTY, WA
SUPERIOR COURT
07/30/2024 - 9:56AM
Linda Myhre Enlow
Thurston County Clerk

Hearing date:
Hearing time:
Judge/Calendar:

**STATE OF WASHINGTON
THURSTON COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT**

STATE OF WASHINGTON,
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,

Plaintiff,

v.

THE GEO GROUP, INC.,

Defendant.

NO. 24-2-02712-34

COMPLAINT FOR INJUNCTIVE
RELIEF

Plaintiff, State of Washington, Department of Health, Environmental Public Health Program, alleges as follows:

I. DESCRIPTION OF ACTION

1.1 The Department of Health (Department), Environmental Public Health Program, brings this action under RCW Title 7 and RCW 43.70.190. The Department seeks an order restraining The GEO Group, Inc. (GEO). GEO has refused entry to Department staff who are authorized to investigate threats to public health under RCW 43.70.170. The Department seeks to restrain further refusal of entry.

II. JURISDICTION

2.1 This Court has jurisdiction over the subject matter and over the parties. RCW 43.70.190 directs the Department to bring an action to enjoin a violation or threatened violation of any of the provisions of the public health laws, rules, or regulations in the superior

1 court in the county in which such violation occurs or is about to occur or in the superior court of
2 Thurston County. GEO owns and operates the detention facility on the Tacoma tideflats in Pierce
3 County. Based upon 722 complaints the Department has received to-date, the Department has
4 concerns about threats to public health at the facility.

5 2.2 The Department has the authority to investigate public health threats and to enter
6 buildings to do so under RCW 43.70.170.

7 **III. PARTIES**

8 3.1 Plaintiff Department of Health is an agency of the State of Washington.

9 3.2 Defendant is The GEO Group, Inc. GEO contracts with the U.S. Immigration and
10 Customs Enforcement (ICE) to provide detention management services at its Tacoma facility.
11 GEO has named its facility the “Northwest ICE Processing Center” (NWIPC).

12 **IV. FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

13 4.1 The Department has received more than 700 hundred complaints from detainees
14 at the NWIPC alleging poor conditions, unsanitary bathrooms, dirty water, poor air quality,
15 COVID outbreaks, animal-grade food quality, and a spate of suicides. Muniz Decl. ¶¶ 5-11.

16 4.2 Soleil Muniz is a Complaint Enforcement Lead and also works in the
17 Environmental Public Health Program. Ms. Muniz’s primary work is to investigate health and
18 safety complaints, including those made by detainees.

19 4.3 On July 18, 2024, Ms. Muniz attempted to investigate the public health
20 complaints from the NWIPC. After identifying herself to GEO’s front desk personnel, Bruce
21 Scott, GEO’s facility administrator, arrived and met her in the lobby area.

22 4.4. At Mr. Scott’s request, Ms. Muniz filled out a form indicating that she sought to
23 inspect the facility under RCW 43.70.170. Ms. Muniz wrote that she was investigating public
24 health concerns related to “water quality, air quality COVID/disease infection, suicide/mental
25 health, and living conditions/hygiene.”
26

1 4.4. Instead of allowing the Department inspector's entry, Mr. Scott said he would
2 confer with ICE. Mr. Scott later returned with Jeffrey White and Michael Knight. Together, they
3 denied Ms. Muniz access to the NWIPC. GEO allowed the Department to take water samples on
4 the "non-secure" side of the facility, i.e., the lobby area, but otherwise denied Ms. Muniz entry
5 to the facility. Muniz Decl. ¶¶ 13-16.

6 4.5 To date, the Department has been unable to enter the NWIPC to investigate
7 complaints it has received from detainees.

8 4.6 The Department believes, based upon the complaints, that the health and safety
9 of detainees is at risk.

10 4.7 The Department believes GEO, by refusing entry, is preventing the Department
11 from carrying out its statutory obligation to investigate public health threats.

12 V. CAUSES OF ACTION

13 5.1 RCW 43.70.190 permits the Department to bring an action to enjoin a violation
14 or threatened violation of the public health laws.

15 5.2 The Department has statutory authority under RCW 43.70.170 to investigate
16 violations or threatened violations of public health laws and to have free and unimpeded access to
17 all buildings to do so.

18 5.3 GEO has refused the Department from entering the NWIPC to conduct its
19 investigation.

20 5.4 The Department is unable to investigate complaints from detainees at NWIPC
21 under RCW 43.70.170 because of GEO's refusal to permit entry.

22 5.5 GEO is in violation of RCW 43.70.170 by refusing to permit entry for the purposes
23 of investigating complaints.

24 5.6 GEO is in violation of RCW 43.70.170 by refusing to permit entry for the purpose
25 of unannounced inspection.
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