

The Mississippi Jury Verdict Reporter

The Most Current and Complete Summary of Mississippi Jury Verdicts

April 2022

Statewide Jury Verdict Coverage

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Civil Jury Verdicts

Timely coverage of civil jury verdicts in Mississippi including court, division, presiding judge, parties, case number, attorneys and results. Notable results from the southern region, including Memphis and New Orleans, are also covered.

Employment Tort/First Amendment - The medical director of a prison (her employer was a "private company") that additionally contracted with a second private company ("private prison") that operated the prison for the government – the medical director alleged the private prison warden revoked her security clearance because she objected to substandard medical care for inmates – she also alleged her employer ("private company") terminated her in violation of public policy, i.e., her outspoken support for inmate healthcare
Woods v. Centurion Professionals et al, 3:19-234

Plaintiff: Jim Waide and Rachel Pierce Waide, *Waide & Associates*, Tupelo

Defense: David W. Long-Daniels and M. Allyson Lumpkin, *Squire Patton Boggs*, Atlanta, GA for Centurion Professionals

Timothy M. Peebles, *Daniel Coker Horton & Bell*, Oxford for Management & Training Corporation (MTC)

Verdict: \$1,167,000 for plaintiff including \$1,000,000 in punitives against MTC

Federal: **Oxford**

Judge: Neal B. Biggers

Date: 3-24-22

Dr. Amy Woods, an internist who is also certified in correctional medicine, was hired in October of 2016 by MHM Health Professionals d/b/a Centurion Professionals. It is a private company that provides

prison medical services.

At relevant times in this litigation, Centurion had a deal with yet another private company, Management & Training Corporation (MTC). MTC has a contract with the Mississippi Department of Corrections to operate the Marshall County Correctional Facility. It is a maximum security prison. The warden was Jesse Williams.

Centurion assigned Woods as the Medical Director at the MTC-operated prison in Marshall County. Thus while she was a Centurion employee, ostensibly her boss was also Warden Jesse Williams who worked for MTC. Thus the organizational structure from top down was:

- (1) State of Mississippi controls the prison,
- (2) Mississippi contracted with MTC to operate the prison,
- (3) MTC contracted with Centurion to provide medical services at the prison, and finally,
- (4) Centurion employed Woods as the medical director.

There was evidence (mostly undisputed) that Woods was highly qualified and did good work. Moving into 2018 and 2019 Woods made internal complaints that the prison was not providing adequate healthcare to inmates. Particularly they were denied outpatient treatment for serious conditions that could not be adequately treated onsite.

There were two key incidents. First an inmate was repeatedly raped and Woods assessed that he need to be treated at a hospital. She received