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Family Settles \$1 Million Suit In Death Of Inmate

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MIAMI -- The medical contractor that supplied medical staff for the Everglades Correctional Facility is on the losing end of a \$1 million lawsuit, officials with the facility said.

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Wexford Health Service agreed to a settlement -- while not admitting liability -- with the family of a Sergio Morejon, a 36-year-old man who was beaten by two prison inmates.

Morejon was injured severely during the beating. Officials said the medical staff at the correctional facility didn't realize his injuries were as severe as initially anticipated and he later died.

Morejon, who was nine months shy of his release from the correctional facility, got into a jailhouse brawl with inmates Monte Jordan and Willie Robinson, officials said.

Facility officials said it took an hour or more for the prison medical staff to call paramedics after Morejon's beating.

Attorney Gregg Schwartz, who is thankful for surveillance videos, is representing Morejon's family.

"In this case, thank God the department of corrections video taped the infirmary scenes," Schwartz said.

The video showed that there was no care or improper care that resulted in the untimely death of Morejon, Schwartz said.

Guards, and eventually, nurses attempted to get him back on his feet, officials said, but they put him in a shower after he cried out for water. Guards eventually placed Morejon in the infirmary, where nurses worked on him for some time before a doctor arrived at 9:37 a.m.

The video shows that doctors telling nurses to start intravenous therapy for Morejon.

As his condition worsened, Miami-Dade Fire Rescue were called to the facility, officials said.

By the afternoon of Feb. 24, 2004, Morejon had died of head trauma and bleeding in the brain, doctors said.

"He actually had a job lined up to work for the same moving company," Schwartz said. "So he had his job lined



up and he was going to try and support his family and was in contact with his family."

Schwartz and Morejon's family have a second suit pending against the state prison system.

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