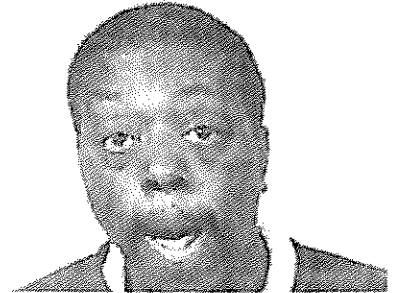


Family of man beaten in the Sedgwick County Jail files a lawsuit

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WICHITA, Kansas -- Edgar Richard was badly beaten in a Sedgwick County Jail cell a year and a half ago. He's still in a nursing home recovering.

"He's real embarrassed now because his teeth are coming out one at a time, and when he eats he cough's and chokes," said Clerene Richard, Edgar Richard's sister. "He can't swallow like he used to swallow."



Manuel Diaz, the sheriff's deputy who beat Richard pled guilty to the crime this spring and received 18 months probation.

Edgar's family says they're disappointed with the sentence. Still they say the lawsuit isn't about punishment, it's about change.

"Something needs to be done about the way they treat the mentally ill in that jail down there," said Donny Richard, Edgar Richard's brother.

According to court documents, for the three months Richard was in jail, he was in an isolation cell 23 hours a day.

He was harassed by jail inmates and deputies.

The water to his cell was often turned off so that he could not have drinking water or water to flush the toilet and the temperature in the cell was often kept at an extremely cold level.

"They just locked him away like he was an animal or something locked him up to himself," said Donny Richard.

Edgar's attorney says inmates like Richard would be better off in a care facility where they can get help.

"It's cheaper to treat them nice then to treat them bad like this, it makes economic sense for the taxpayers that these conditions change," Larry Wall, Richard's attorney.

The suit asks for more than \$75,000 which Wall says would go into a trust for Richard and family.

He says Richard's family won't benefit financially from winning the suit but a change in the system would be a legacy to their brother.

"I don't want to see this happen to anyone else. That's the main idea right there. No one should have to go through that," said Donny Richard.

It's Sedgwick County policy not to comment on pending litigation.