

DOCKET NO: HHD-CV-18-6098918-S: SUPERIOR COURT

LYNNETTE RICHARDSON ADM. : J.D. OF HARTFORD
E/O J'ALLEN JONES, ET AL.

V. :

SCOTT SEMPLE COMMISSIONER : OCTOBER 16, 2025
DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS, ET AL.

MEMORANDUM OF DECISION

This action arises out of the circumstances surrounding the 2018 death of the plaintiff, Lynette Richardson's decedent, J'Allen Jones (the decedent), while he was incarcerated at Garner Correctional Institution in Newtown (Garner). On March 5, 2024, the defendants, various Department of Correction employees, filed a motion for summary judgment. (Docket entry # 192.00.) In connection with that motion, the defendants provided the court with Exhibit A, a disc containing a recording that depicts the events that culminated in the decedent's death. The defendants attempted to file this recording pursuant to a protective order between the parties that was previously entered as an order of the court, *Noble, J.* on November 13, 2019. (Docket entry # 115.86.) Following a petition for review to the Appellate Court filed by a nonparty, on October 25, 2024, the Appellate Court remanded the matter "with direction to promptly conduct a properly noticed hearing in compliance with Practice Book § 11-20A on the issue of whether the Exhibit A should be sealed or its



disclosure limited in whole or in part.”⁴ (Docket entry # 207.10.) Following proper notice to the public, the court began this hearing on December 20, 2024, and the hearing was subsequently continued to and concluded on August 22, 2025.² At the hearing, the court heard witness testimony as well as comments from interested members of the public, including representatives of media and legal organizations.

The court’s analysis of the issue before it is governed by the standards set forth in Practice Book § 11-20A. That Practice Book rule provides in relevant part that: “the judicial authority may order that files, affidavits, documents, or other materials on file or lodged with the court or in connection with a court proceeding be sealed or their disclosure limited *only* if the judicial authority concludes that such order is necessary to preserve an interest which is determined to override the public’s interest in viewing such materials. The judicial authority shall first consider reasonable alternatives to any such order and any such order shall be no broader than necessary to protect such overriding interest. An agreement of the parties to seal or limit the disclosure of documents on file with the court or filed in connection with a court proceeding shall not constitute a sufficient basis for the issuance of such an order.” (Emphasis added.) Practice Book § 11-20A (c). “In connection with any



¹ Neither side has filed a motion to seal regarding Exhibit A. Nevertheless, in accordance with the Appellate Court’s remand order, the court will apply the law found in Practice Book § 11-20A to decide whether the exhibit at issue should be sealed or its disclosure otherwise limited. Moreover, in light of the Appellate Court’s order, the ordinary procedure for lodging a record set forth in § 11-20A is not applied.

² The court also allowed both sides to file post-hearing briefs regarding the potential applicability of a federal court case, *Mustafa v. Byars*, United States District Court, Docket No. 3:19-CV-01780-VAB (D. Conn. March 21, 2025), appeal filed, (2d Cir. April 15, 2025). These briefs were filed on September 19, 2025, and October 10, 2025, respectively.

order issued pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, the judicial authority shall articulate the overriding interest being protected and shall specify its findings underlying such order and the duration of such order.” Practice Book § 11-20A (d). Although our rules of practice do allow for the court to seal certain documents in a court file, “there shall be a presumption that documents filed with the court shall be available to the public.” Practice Book § 11-20A (a).

Our Supreme Court has stated that “[t]he presumption of openness of court proceedings . . . is a fundamental principle of our judicial system.” *Doe v. Connecticut Bar Examining Committee*, 263 Conn. 39, 65, 818 A.2d 14 (2003). “This policy of openness is not to be abridged lightly. In fact, the legislature has provided for very few instances in which it has determined that, as a matter of course, certain privacy concerns outweigh the public’s interest in open judicial proceedings.” (Internal quotation marks omitted.) *Greenan v. Greenan*, 150 Conn. App. 289, 294, 91 A.3d 909, cert. denied, 314 Conn. 902, 99 A.3d 1167 (2014). “For situations that do not fall within these specified exceptions and yet in which a limit on disclosure is requested, the trial court must consider whether a substantial privacy interest exists to override the public’s interest in open judicial proceedings.” *Vargas v. Doe*, 96 Conn. App. 399, 407, 900 A.2d 525, cert. denied, 280 Conn. 923, 908 A.2d 546 (2006). According to our Supreme Court, “§ 11–20A codifies the common-law presumption of public access to judicial documents” *Rosado v. Bridgeport Roman Catholic Diocesan Corp.*, 292 Conn. 1, 46, 970 A.2d 656, cert. denied sub nom. *Bridgeport Roman Catholic Diocesan Corp. v. New York Times Co.*, 558 U.S.



991, 130 S. Ct. 500, 175 L. Ed. 2d 348 (2009). "Connecticut follows the . . . approach under which any document filed that a court reasonably may rely on in support of its adjudicatory function is a judicial document." Id. Indeed, "summary judgment motions and their attached exhibits, regardless of whether they were granted or denied, are judicial documents. . . . [T]he presumption of public access applies to these documents." (Emphasis omitted; internal quotation marks omitted.) *Bank of New York v. Bell*, 120 Conn. App. 837, 852, 993 A.2d 1022, appeal dismissed, 298 Conn. 917, 4 A.3d 122 (2010).

As can be seen by this governing law, there is strong presumption that a judicial document, such as an exhibit filed in connection with a summary judgment motion, should be publicly available. As the party that has filed the motion for summary judgment that relies on the recording, and the party that is requesting that the exhibit's disclosure be limited in some manner, the defendants have the burden to articulate a substantial privacy interest that could overcome the public's interest in open proceedings.

During the August 22, 2025 hearing, the court heard testimony from the Department of Correction's Deputy Commissioner William Mulligan. He testified to generalized security concerns if the entire recording were to be publicly available. Specifically, he mentioned that the security of Garner could potentially be compromised if individuals in the public were made aware of the location of doors, metal detectors, and cameras within the facility.

Certainly, the safety and security of correctional institutions, along with the



inmates and employees inside such facilities, is an important interest. Indeed, some courts have referenced these concerns when sealing or limiting the disclosure of video exhibits. See, e.g., *Boland v. Wilkins*, United States District Court, Docket # 3:18-CV-1958 (MPS) (D. Conn. February 4, 2020) (granting motion to seal when the “[d]efendants assert[ed] that safety and security concerns [would] be compromised if the video’s contents, showing layout of the Cheshire Correctional Institution and security procedures, [were] available to public inspection”); *Mustafa v. Byars*, United States District Court, Docket # 3:19-CV-01780-VAB (D. Conn. March 21, 2025), appeal filed, (2d Cir. April 15, 2025) (limiting public dissemination of video due to “proper consideration of the risk of widespread dissemination of sensitive videos depicting blind spots and security protocols of a correctional facility that can be viewed by anyone, anywhere, at any time”). Given that the recording at issue depicts many different sections of Garner while the defendants move the decedent around the prison, it is reasonable to limit the video in a manner consistent with those legitimate safety concerns.

That being said, it is clear to the court that the majority of the recording cannot be sealed. The underlying issue in this case is the conduct of the defendants and the decedent during the chain of events that led to the decedent’s death. These circumstances are directly depicted on the recording. The defendants chose to submit the entire video in connection with their motion for summary judgment, rather than only a portion. Therefore, it not reasonable for the defendants now to advocate that only a certain portion of the video be publicly available. As demonstrated by the



number of individuals who attended the § 11-20A hearing, this matter has generated substantial public interest. Moreover, both sides essentially agree that Exhibit A is the primary exhibit supporting the defendants' motion for summary judgment. It is imperative that members of the public be able to view the exhibit so that they can evaluate the court's decision on that motion. Under these circumstances, with the exceptions noted below, the defendants have not met their burden to articulate a substantial privacy interest that overrides the public's interest in open judicial proceedings.

Accordingly, within two weeks of this court's order, the defendants are directed to prepare a version of the recording, in a format that is capable of being played in the court's computer system, that blurs out the location of the following: (1) doors and door numbers; (2) metal detectors; and (3) staff members in the background who are not named as defendants in this case or otherwise not directly implicated in the events giving rise to this lawsuit. These items must be blurred out because they are clearly visible on the recording, and there are no reasonable less restrictive alternatives available. The defendants may also mute any radio transmissions between correctional officers if they feel the conversation therein raises legitimate security concerns such as relaying information related to access to various areas. In addition, in an effort to protect the dignity of the decedent, his genitals and buttocks must also be blurred out. Otherwise, the recording shall not be altered or shortened in any way from the video previously submitted as Exhibit A.



After the defendants have prepared the revised recording, the plaintiff's counsel

shall be given two weeks to review it to determine if there are any objections.

Provided there are no objections, the defendants shall provide a copy to the court for an in-camera review to confirm that the modifications made comply with this court's order. Once the court confirms compliance, the defendants shall file the revised exhibit with the clerk's office, and the exhibit shall be publicly available in accordance with ordinary clerk's office procedure. The original Exhibit A is hereby ordered sealed and to be replaced by the newly submitted exhibit. These orders shall remain in effect until further order of the court.

BY THE COURT



CLAUDIA A. BAIO, JUDGE



Checklist for Clerk

Docket Number: HHD-CV18-6098918-S

Case Name: Lynnette Richardson Adm. E/O
J'Allen Jones, Et Al. v. Scott Semple
Commissioner Dept. of Corrections, Et Al.

Memorandum of Decision dated: 10/16/25

File Sealed: Yes No X

Memo Sealed: Yes No X

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for Publication XXXX**

**This Memorandum of Decision may NOT be
released to the Reporter of Judicial Decisions
for Publication**

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State of Connecticut Judicial Branch Superior Court Case Look-up



Superior Court Case Look-up
Civil/Family
Housing
Small Claims

HHD-CV18-
6098918-S

Prefix: BAO

RICHARDSON, LYNNETTE, ADMINISTRATRIX FOR THE ESTATE Et Al v.
SEMPLE, SCOTT, COMMISSIONER OF DEPT OF CORRECTIONS Et Al

Case Type: T90 File Date: 08/15/2018 Return Date: 09/18/2018

Case Detail Notices History Scheduled Court Dates E-Services Login Screen Section Help Exhibits

To receive an email when there is activity on this case, click here.

Attorney/Firm Juris Number Look-up

Case Look-up

By Party Name

By Docket Number

By Attorney/Firm Juris Number

By Property Address

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Motion to Seal or Close

Calendar Notices

Court Events Look-up

By Date

By Docket Number

By Attorney/Firm Juris Number

Legal Notices

Pending Foreclosure Sales

Understanding

Display of Case Information

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Information Updated as of: 10/16/2025

Case Information

Case Type: T90 - Torts - All other

Court Location: HARTFORD JD

List Type: JURY (JY)

Trial List Claim: 05/29/2025

Last Action Date: 10/10/2025 (The "last action date" is the date the information was entered in the system)

Disposition Information

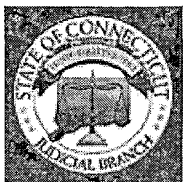
Disposition Date:

Disposition:

Judge or Magistrate:

Party & Appearance Information

Party	No Fee Party	Category
P-01 LYNNETTE RICHARDSON ADMINISTRATRIX FOR THE ESTATE OF J'ALLEN JONES AND INDIVIDUALLY		Plaintiff
Attorney: SPINELLA & ASSOCIATES (413617) File Date: 08/15/2018 ONE LEWIS STREET HARTFORD, CT 06103		
Attorney: ADVOCATES LAW FIRM (412771) File Date: 03/07/2022 6 VINE HILL ROAD FARMINGTON, CT 060321809		
P-02 JESSICA JONES		Plaintiff
Attorney: SPINELLA & ASSOCIATES (413617) File Date: 08/15/2018 ONE LEWIS STREET HARTFORD, CT 06103		
Attorney: ADVOCATES LAW FIRM (412771) File Date: 03/07/2022 6 VINE HILL ROAD FARMINGTON, CT 060321809		
D-01 SCOTT SEMPLE COMMISSIONER OF DEPT OF CORRECTIONS, IN HIS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY REMOVED		Defendant
D-02 ANTHONY CORCELLA WARDEN OF GARNER CI, IN HIS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY REMOVED		Defendant
D-03 ANTHONY KACPRYZSKI CORRECTIONAL OFFICER AT GARNER CI, IN HIS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY		Defendant
Attorney: JAMES MICHAEL BELFORTI (438739) File Date: 10/05/2018 AG-PUBLIC SAFETY DEPT 165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR HARTFORD, CT 06106		
Attorney: AAG TERENCE M O NEILL (412261) File Date: 10/05/2018 AG-PUBLIC SAFETY 165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR HARTFORD, CT 06106		



Comments

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- D-04 GREGORY BOUCHER CORRECTIONAL OFFICER AT GARNER CI, IN HIS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY** Defendant
Attorney: ☞ JAMES MICHAEL BELFORTI (438739) File Date: 10/05/2018
AG-PUBLIC SAFETY DEPT
165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR
HARTFORD , CT 06106
Attorney: ☞ AAG TERRENCE M O NEILL (412261) File Date: 10/05/2018
AG-PUBLIC SAFETY
165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR
HARTFORD , CT 06106
- D-05 GRIFFIN CORRECTIONAL OFFICER AT GARNER CI, IN HIS/HER INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY** Defendant
Attorney: ☞ JAMES MICHAEL BELFORTI (438739) File Date: 10/05/2018
AG-PUBLIC SAFETY DEPT
165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR
HARTFORD , CT 06106
Attorney: ☞ AAG TERRENCE M O NEILL (412261) File Date: 10/05/2018
AG-PUBLIC SAFETY
165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR
HARTFORD , CT 06106
- D-06 GRAY CORRECTIONAL OFFICER AT GARNER CI, IN HIS/HER INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY** Defendant
Attorney: ☞ JAMES MICHAEL BELFORTI (438739) File Date: 10/05/2018
AG-PUBLIC SAFETY DEPT
165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR
HARTFORD , CT 06106
Attorney: ☞ AAG TERRENCE M O NEILL (412261) File Date: 10/05/2018
AG-PUBLIC SAFETY
165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR
HARTFORD , CT 06106
- D-07 RINALDI CORRECTIONAL OFFICER AT GARNER CI, IN HIS/HER INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY** Defendant
Attorney: ☞ JAMES MICHAEL BELFORTI (438739) File Date: 10/05/2018
AG-PUBLIC SAFETY DEPT
165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR
HARTFORD , CT 06106
Attorney: ☞ AAG TERRENCE M O NEILL (412261) File Date: 10/05/2018
AG-PUBLIC SAFETY
165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR
HARTFORD , CT 06106
- D-08 BUSALACCHI CORRECTIONAL OFFICER AT GARNER CI, IN HIS/HER INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY** Defendant
Attorney: ☞ JAMES MICHAEL BELFORTI (438739) File Date: 10/05/2018
AG-PUBLIC SAFETY DEPT
165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR
HARTFORD , CT 06106
Attorney: ☞ AAG TERRENCE M O NEILL (412261) File Date: 10/05/2018
AG-PUBLIC SAFETY
165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR
HARTFORD , CT 06106
- D-09 ROSADO CORRECTIONAL OFFICER AT GARNER CI, IN HIS/HER INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY** Defendant
Attorney: ☞ JAMES MICHAEL BELFORTI (438739) File Date: 10/05/2018
AG-PUBLIC SAFETY DEPT
165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR
HARTFORD , CT 06106
Attorney: ☞ AAG TERRENCE M O NEILL (412261) File Date: 10/05/2018
AG-PUBLIC SAFETY
165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR
HARTFORD , CT 06106
- D-10 GINSBERG MEDICAL UNIT EMPLOYEE AT GARNER CI, IN HIS/HER INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY** Defendant
Attorney: ☞ JAMES MICHAEL BELFORTI (438739) File Date: 10/05/2018
AG-PUBLIC SAFETY DEPT
165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR
HARTFORD , CT 06106
Attorney: ☞ AAG TERRENCE M O NEILL (412261) File Date: 10/05/2018
AG-PUBLIC SAFETY

165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR
HARTFORD, CT 06106

D-11 GUEST CORRECTIONAL OFFICER AT GARNER CI, IN HIS/HER INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY	Defendant
Attorney:  JAMES MICHAEL BELFORTI (438739) File Date: 10/05/2018 AG-PUBLIC SAFETY DEPT 165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR HARTFORD, CT 06106	
Attorney:  AAG TERRENCE M O NEILL (412261) File Date: 10/05/2018 AG-PUBLIC SAFETY 165 CAPITOL AVE 5TH FLR HARTFORD, CT 06106	
D-12 RYAN CORRECTIONAL OFFICER AT GARNER CI, IN HIS/HER INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY <i>REMOVED</i>	Defendant
D-13 DR. SUSANNAH TUNG <i>REMOVED</i>	Defendant
D-14 WARDEN DENISE DILWORTH <i>REMOVED</i>	Defendant
L-01 APPELLATE COURT DOCKET #44616 Non-Appearing	For Notice Only or Proposed Intervenor
L-02 APPELLATE COURT DOCKET #48096; WITHDRAWN <i>REMOVED</i>	For Notice Only or Proposed Intervenor
L-03 ACLU OF CONNECTICUT Attorney: DAN BARRETT (437438) File Date: 10/31/2024 P.O. BOX # 320647 HARTFORD, CT 06132	For Notice Only or Proposed Intervenor
L-04 APPELLATE COURT DOCKET #48427 Non-Appearing	For Notice Only or Proposed Intervenor
L-05 CT EXAMINER, LLC Attorney: ALEXANDER TIVA TAUBES (437388) File Date: 08/06/2025 470 JAMES STREET SUITE 007 NEW HAVEN, CT 06513	For Notice Only or Proposed Intervenor

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- For civil cases filed prior to 2014, court orders and judicial notices that are electronic are available publicly over the internet. Orders can be viewed by selecting the link to the order from the list below. Notices can be viewed by clicking the **Notices** tab above and selecting the link.*
- Documents, court orders and judicial notices in an electronic (paperless) file can be viewed at any judicial district courthouse during normal business hours.*
- Pleadings or other documents that are not electronic (paperless) can be viewed only during normal business hours at the Clerk's Office in the Judicial District where the case is located.*
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