

# Santa Cruz Beatings

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Santa Cruz County as well unless you're a motorist driving through who engages in emergency "roadside resting."

The summer emergency shelter program serves only 28 of the city's 500-1500 homeless residents. It turns away several people each night, literally forcing the most vulnerable to become both criminals and the prey of criminals.

The Sleeping Ban coupled with City Council indifference make reporting violence against the poor pointless and even dangerous. More than half of all sleeping tickets go to warrant, which means that homeless people then can be arrested, lose their vehicles, and face higher fines.

Corrupt local Judge John Mulligan arrogantly and methodically misinforms homeless defendants that they have no right to a jury trial or a public defender for such "Failure to Appear" warrants, enmeshing his victims in a schedule of

fines and/or forced community service (for which another fee may be demanded).

Recently, homeless vehicle dweller Dennis Rehm successfully raised the Edwards/Flory defense, based on the legal peculiarity that jail is supposedly not a judicial option for one convicted of an infraction; hence, even if one refuses to pay a fine or do community service, the court has no other option than a civil suit against the homeless defendant for costs involved. While there is a law which makes it a misdemeanor not to pay a vehicular fine, sleeping bans (even in vehicles) are considered non-vehicular, and there is no law that criminalizes not paying a non-vehicular fine.

Rehm refused to pay his fine, declaring he would rather go to jail. The judge suppressed the warrant; and though he warned Rehm that another warrant would probably be issued, none was.

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