ELECTRONICALLY FILED
Superior Court of California,
Inyo County
10/20/2026 at 12:57:40 PM
By: Lindsay Eropkin, Deputy Clerk

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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY OF INYO

WILLIAM JAMES DICKINSON, an individual, and CYNTHIA LOUISE DICKINSON, an individual, each individually and as successors in interest to JAMES WILLIAM DICKINSON, deceased,

Plaintiffs,

vs.

TANI LAVERNE TATUM, an individual; and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No.: 26UC74392

COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES:

1. **NEGLIGENCE (SURVIVAL ACTION);**
2. **NEGLIGENCE PER SE (SURVIVAL ACTION); and**
3. **WRONGFUL DEATH—Code Civ. Proc., § 377.60.**

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL
Unlimited Civil Jurisdiction

Plaintiffs WILLIAM JAMES DICKINSON and CYNTHIA LOUISE DICKINSON, individually and as successors in interest to JAMES WILLIAM DICKINSON, deceased (collectively, "Plaintiffs"), hereby complain and allege as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. This action arises from the death of James William Dickinson ("Decedent"), a 55-year-old motorcyclist who was struck on June 10, 2026, at the intersection of East Elm Street and Howard Street in the City of Bishop, County of Inyo, California, by a 2017 Mercedes-Benz GLE driven by Defendant Tani Laverne Tatum ("Defendant Tatum").

2. Defendant Tatum drove past the stop sign on Howard Street without stopping and turned left directly into the path of Decedent's motorcycle, which had the right-of-way. The investigating officer found that Defendant Tatum displayed symptoms of intoxication and concluded that she caused the collision by driving under the influence.

3. Decedent was thrown from his motorcycle onto the pavement. He suffered several fractured ribs, a punctured lung, and internal bleeding, and he died of those injuries three days later, on June 13, 2026.

4. Plaintiffs, Decedent's parents, bring this action individually for Decedent's wrongful death, and as Decedent's successors in interest on the causes of action that survived his death, including his claim for exemplary damages.

THE PARTIES

5. At all relevant times, Plaintiff William James Dickinson was an individual residing in the State of New York, and over the age of eighteen. He is Decedent's father.

6. At all relevant times, Plaintiff Cynthia Louise Dickinson was an individual residing in the State of New York, and over the age of eighteen. She is Decedent's mother.

7. Decedent James William Dickinson was born on October 29, 1970, and died on June 13, 2026, at the age of 55. At the time of the collision and of his death, Decedent resided in the State of California.

8. At the time of his death, Decedent was divorced and left no surviving spouse. His marriage was dissolved by a judgment of the Superior Court of California, County of San

Diego, entered on November 15, 2001. Decedent had no registered domestic partner and no children, natural or adopted, and left no surviving issue.

9. Because Decedent left no surviving spouse, domestic partner, or issue, Plaintiffs, as his surviving parents, are the persons who would be entitled to his property by intestate succession under Probate Code section 6402, subdivision (b). Plaintiffs are therefore Decedent's heirs and the persons entitled to assert a cause of action for his wrongful death under Code of Civil Procedure section 377.60, subdivision (a).

10. Plaintiffs are Decedent's successors in interest, as defined in Code of Civil Procedure section 377.11, and succeed to Decedent's interest in this action. No personal representative has been appointed for Decedent's estate, and no proceeding is pending in California for the administration of Decedent's estate. Plaintiffs are therefore entitled to commence this action on Decedent's causes of action that survived his death under Code of Civil Procedure section 377.30. Plaintiffs have executed and filed with this Complaint the declaration required by Code of Civil Procedure section 377.32.

11. At all relevant times, Defendant Tani Laverne Tatum was an individual residing in the County of Inyo, California, and over the age of eighteen. At all relevant times, Defendant Tatum was the owner and driver of the white 2017 Mercedes-Benz GLE sport utility vehicle, California license plate number 8FAH094 (the "Mercedes"), involved in the collision described below.

12. The true names and capacities, whether individual, corporate, partnership, associate, or otherwise, of Does 1 through 20, inclusive, are unknown to Plaintiffs, who therefore sue these Defendants by such fictitious names pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure section 474. Plaintiffs will seek leave to amend this Complaint to allege the true names and capacities of Does 1 through 20 when they are ascertained.

13. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and on that basis allege, that each Defendant named in this Complaint, including Does 1 through 20, inclusive, is responsible in some manner for one or more of the events and happenings alleged herein, and proximately caused Plaintiffs' injuries and damages and the injuries, damages, and death of Decedent.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

14. Subject-matter jurisdiction is proper in the Superior Court of California, County of Inyo, which is a court of general jurisdiction.

15. Personal jurisdiction over all Defendants is proper under Code of Civil Procedure section 410.10, which provides that California courts are authorized to exercise jurisdiction over parties "on any basis not inconsistent with the Constitution of this state or of the United States."

16. Venue is proper, under Code of Civil Procedure section 395, subdivision (a), in the Superior Court of California, County of Inyo, because the injury causing Decedent's death occurred at the intersection of East Elm Street and Howard Street, within the City of Bishop, County of Inyo, State of California, and because Defendant Tatum resides in the County of Inyo.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The Collision

17. On Wednesday, June 10, 2026, at approximately 7:11 p.m., Decedent was riding his 2001 Harley-Davidson motorcycle westbound on East Elm Street in the City of Bishop, approaching the street's intersection with Howard Street.

18. East Elm Street and Howard Street are residential streets with a speed limit of 25 miles per hour. Howard Street meets East Elm Street at a "T" intersection. A stop sign, clearly posted and visible, controls northbound traffic on Howard Street at the intersection, and a limit line marks the place where northbound vehicles must stop. Traffic on East Elm Street is not required to stop at the intersection.

19. At the time of the collision, the weather was clear, the roadway was dry, it was still daylight, and all roadway markings and signs were clear and in good working order.

20. At the same time, Defendant Tatum was driving the Mercedes northbound on Howard Street toward the stop sign at East Elm Street.

21. Defendant Tatum slowed as she approached the stop sign, but she did not stop. She drove across the marked limit line and into the intersection without coming to a complete

stop, and began a left turn onto westbound East Elm Street directly in front of Decedent, who was proceeding straight on East Elm Street and had the right-of-way.

22. The front of Decedent's motorcycle collided with the right front of the Mercedes. Decedent was ejected from his motorcycle, traveled approximately 10 to 15 feet through the air, and landed on the pavement on his left side.

23. The force of the collision broke the front wheel of Decedent's motorcycle from its front fork suspension, bent and twisted the forks, and broke off the handlebars.

24. Outdoor security cameras at a residence at the intersection and at a nearby hotel recorded the collision. The recordings show the Mercedes crossing the marked limit line without stopping and turning into Decedent's path.

25. After the collision, Defendant Tatum told the investigating Bishop Police Department officer that she had made a complete stop at the stop sign. The security-camera recordings show that she did not.

Defendant Tatum Was Driving Under the Influence

26. When the investigating officer spoke with Defendant Tatum at the scene, she displayed symptoms of intoxication.

27. The Bishop Police Department Traffic Crash Report for the collision concludes that Defendant Tatum caused the collision by driving in violation of Vehicle Code section 23152, subdivision (b), which prohibits driving with 0.08 percent or more, by weight, of alcohol in the blood. The report identifies as associated factors Defendant Tatum's violation of Vehicle Code section 22450, subdivision (a), by failing to make a complete stop at the marked limit line of a posted stop sign, and of Vehicle Code section 21802, subdivision (a), by failing to yield the right-of-way to oncoming traffic. The report lists Vehicle Code section 23152, subdivision (a), as the primary collision factor, identifies Defendant Tatum as the party at fault, and records that violation as cited.

28. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and on that basis allege, that before the collision Defendant Tatum voluntarily consumed alcoholic beverages to the point of intoxication, knowing that she would thereafter drive the Mercedes on public streets, and then

drove the Mercedes through the residential streets of the City of Bishop while intoxicated. Plaintiffs' information and belief is based on, among other things, the investigating officer's observations and conclusions described above.

29. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and on that basis allege, that Defendant Tatum is the defendant in a criminal prosecution pending in the Superior Court of California, County of Inyo, arising from her driving under the influence at the time of the collision.

Decedent's Injuries and Death

30. After the collision, Decedent lay in the roadway, groaning. He did not lose consciousness, and he complained of pain to his left ribs and the left side of his back.

31. Paramedics treated Decedent at the scene, and Sierra Lifeflight transported him to Northern Inyo Hospital in Bishop, where he was found to have sustained several fractured ribs, a punctured lung, and internal bleeding. Decedent was in critical condition.

32. Decedent was then flown to Renown Regional Medical Center in Reno, Nevada, for emergency treatment, where he was admitted and treated until his death.

33. Despite that treatment, Decedent died at Renown Regional Medical Center on June 13, 2026, at approximately 7:54 p.m. The cause of death certified on his death certificate is complications of blunt force injuries of the chest and abdomen, due to the motorcycle-car collision.

34. Before his death, Decedent incurred expenses for emergency medical care and transport and for hospital and medical treatment, and his motorcycle was damaged in the collision.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

NEGLIGENCE (SURVIVAL ACTION)

(Plaintiffs, as Successors in Interest to James William Dickinson, Deceased, against Defendant Tatum and Does 1 through 20, inclusive)

35. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference each and every allegation and statement contained in the prior paragraphs, above, as though fully set forth herein.

36. At all relevant times, Defendant Tatum owed Decedent and other persons

lawfully using the public streets a duty to exercise reasonable care in the operation of the Mercedes, including the duty to drive only while sober, to stop at posted stop signs and marked limit lines, to keep a proper lookout, and to yield the right-of-way to approaching vehicles, and to refrain from operating the Mercedes in a manner that created an unreasonable risk of harm to others.

37. Defendant Tatum breached that duty by, among other things, driving the Mercedes after consuming alcohol to the point of intoxication; failing to stop at the marked limit line of the posted stop sign on Howard Street; failing to keep a proper lookout for traffic on East Elm Street; failing to yield the right-of-way to Decedent, who was approaching so closely as to constitute an immediate hazard; turning left into Decedent's path; and by other acts and omissions that may be discovered.

38. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and on that basis allege, that Does 1 through 20, inclusive, negligently caused or contributed to the collision and to Decedent's injuries and death in a manner that will be established when their identities and conduct are ascertained.

39. Defendants' negligence was a substantial factor in causing the collision, Decedent's injuries, and his death.

40. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' negligence, Decedent sustained and incurred, before his death, loss and damage including expenses for emergency medical care and transport, hospital care, and medical treatment, and damage to and loss of use of his motorcycle and other personal property, in an amount to be proven at trial. Under Code of Civil Procedure sections 377.30 and 377.34, Decedent's cause of action for that loss and damage survived his death and passed to Plaintiffs as his successors in interest.

41. Defendant Tatum's conduct was despicable and was carried on with a willful and conscious disregard of the rights and safety of others, and constitutes malice within the meaning of Civil Code section 3294, subdivision (c)(1). Knowing the danger that an intoxicated driver poses to everyone on the road, Defendant Tatum voluntarily consumed alcohol to the point of intoxication, knowing that she would then drive, and then drove the Mercedes through residential streets while intoxicated, where she ran a posted stop sign and

turned into the path of Decedent's oncoming motorcycle. Defendant Tatum was aware of the probable dangerous consequences of her conduct and willfully and deliberately failed to avoid them. Decedent would have been entitled to recover punitive and exemplary damages against Defendant Tatum had he lived, and Plaintiffs, as his successors in interest, are entitled to recover those damages under Civil Code section 3294 and Code of Civil Procedure section 377.34, in an amount sufficient to punish Defendant Tatum and deter similar conduct.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

NEGLIGENCE PER SE (SURVIVAL ACTION)

(Plaintiffs, as Successors in Interest to James William Dickinson, Deceased, against Defendant Tatum and Does 1 through 20, inclusive)

42. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference each and every allegation and statement contained in the prior paragraphs, above, as though fully set forth herein.

43. Vehicle Code section 23152, subdivision (a), provides: "It is unlawful for a person who is under the influence of any alcoholic beverage to drive a vehicle." Vehicle Code section 23152, subdivision (b), provides: "It is unlawful for a person who has 0.08 percent or more, by weight, of alcohol in his or her blood to drive a vehicle."

44. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and on that basis allege, that Defendant Tatum violated Vehicle Code section 23152, subdivisions (a) and (b), by driving the Mercedes while under the influence of an alcoholic beverage and with 0.08 percent or more, by weight, of alcohol in her blood.

45. Vehicle Code section 22450, subdivision (a), provides in relevant part: "The driver of any vehicle approaching a stop sign at the entrance to, or within, an intersection shall stop at a limit line, if marked, otherwise before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection."

46. Defendant Tatum violated Vehicle Code section 22450, subdivision (a), by failing to stop at the marked limit line of the stop sign controlling northbound traffic on Howard Street at East Elm Street.

47. Vehicle Code section 21802, subdivision (a), provides: "The driver of any

vehicle approaching a stop sign at the entrance to, or within, an intersection shall stop as required by Section 22450. The driver shall then yield the right-of-way to any vehicles which have approached from another highway, or which are approaching so closely as to constitute an immediate hazard, and shall continue to yield the right-of-way to those vehicles until he or she can proceed with reasonable safety."

48. Defendant Tatum violated Vehicle Code section 21802, subdivision (a), by failing to stop and by failing to yield the right-of-way to Decedent, whose motorcycle was approaching on East Elm Street so closely as to constitute an immediate hazard, and by entering the intersection and turning left before she could proceed with reasonable safety.

49. Each of Defendant Tatum's violations of these statutes was a substantial factor in causing the collision, Decedent's injuries, and his death.

50. Decedent's injuries and death resulted from an occurrence of the nature that Vehicle Code sections 23152, 22450, and 21802 were designed to prevent: a collision caused by an impaired driver, and a collision caused by a driver who fails to stop at a stop sign and to yield the right-of-way to approaching traffic.

51. Decedent was one of the class of persons for whose protection those statutes were adopted: persons lawfully traveling on public streets, including a motorist proceeding with the right-of-way through an intersection controlled by a stop sign on the intersecting street.

52. Under Evidence Code section 669, Defendant Tatum is therefore presumed to have failed to exercise due care.

53. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant Tatum's violations of these statutes, Decedent sustained and incurred, before his death, the loss and damage alleged in the First Cause of Action, above, which survived his death and passed to Plaintiffs as his successors in interest under Code of Civil Procedure sections 377.30 and 377.34.

54. For the reasons alleged in the First Cause of Action, above, Defendant Tatum's conduct constitutes malice within the meaning of Civil Code section 3294, and Plaintiffs, as Decedent's successors in interest, are entitled to recover punitive and exemplary damages

against Defendant Tatum under Civil Code section 3294 and Code of Civil Procedure section 377.34.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

WRONGFUL DEATH—Code Civ. Proc., § 377.60

(Plaintiffs, Individually, against All Defendants)

55. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference each and every allegation and statement contained in the prior paragraphs, above, as though fully set forth herein.

56. Plaintiffs bring this cause of action individually, as Decedent's heirs, pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 377.60, subdivision (a).

57. As alleged above, Defendants' negligence, including Defendant Tatum's violations of Vehicle Code sections 23152, 22450, and 21802, was a substantial factor in causing Decedent's death.

58. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' wrongful conduct and Decedent's death, Plaintiffs have been deprived of the love, companionship, comfort, care, assistance, protection, affection, society, and moral support of their son, and have thereby been damaged in an amount to be proven at trial.

59. As a further direct and proximate result of Defendants' wrongful conduct and Decedent's death, Plaintiffs have been deprived of the financial support, gifts, and benefits they would have received from Decedent, and of the value of the household services Decedent would have provided to them, and have incurred reasonable funeral and cremation expenses, all in an amount to be proven at trial.

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PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs William James Dickinson and Cynthia Louise Dickinson pray for judgment against Defendants, and each of them, as follows:

On the First and Second Causes of Action, by Plaintiffs as Successors in Interest to James William Dickinson, Deceased:

1. For damages for the loss and damage Decedent sustained or incurred before his death, including medical and related expenses and property damage, according to proof;

2. For punitive and exemplary damages against Defendant Tani Laverne Tatum, according to proof;

On the Third Cause of Action, by Plaintiffs Individually:

3. For general damages for the loss of Decedent's love, companionship, comfort, care, assistance, protection, affection, society, and moral support, according to proof;

4. For economic damages, including the loss of Decedent's financial support, gifts, and benefits and the value of his household services, according to proof;

5. For reasonable funeral and cremation expenses, according to proof;

On All Causes of Action:

6. For prejudgment interest as permitted by law;

7. For post-judgment interest as permitted by law;

8. For costs of suit herein incurred; and

9. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

DATED: October 20, 2026 GAMMILL LAW | ACCIDENT & INJURY LAWYERS

By: _____

DAVID W. GAMMILL
Attorney for Plaintiffs
WILLIAM JAMES DICKINSON and
CYNTHIA LOUISE DICKINSON

DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY

Plaintiffs hereby demand a trial by jury as to all causes of action and issues so triable.

DATED: October 20, 2026 GAMMILL LAW | ACCIDENT & INJURY LAWYERS

By: _____

DAVID W. GAMMILL
Attorney for Plaintiffs
WILLIAM JAMES DICKINSON and
CYNTHIA LOUISE DICKINSON