

Florida Department of Corrections



Office of the Inspector General

**CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION
INVESTIGATIVE ASSIST
CASE # 18-20714**



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
INVESTIGATIVE ASSIST SUMMARY REPORT



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Case Number: 18-20714

OIG Inspector: Senior Inspector Janine Knight

Outside Agency: Florida Department of Law Enforcement

Outside Agency Investigator: Special Agent Jared Nichols

Date Assigned or Initiated: December 2, 2018

Complaint Against: Inmate Almus Willis DC# K72701 (*Deceased*)

Location of Incident – Institution/Facility/Office: Holmes Correctional Institution

Complainant: NA

Outside Agency Case #: PE-37-0160

Use of Force Number: NA

PREA Number: NA

Classification of Incident: In Custody Inmate Death

Confidential Medical Information Included: Yes No

Whistle-Blower Investigation: Yes No

Chief Inspector General Case Number: NA



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I. AUTHORITY

The Florida Department of Corrections, Office of the Inspector General, by designation of the Secretary and § 944.31, Florida Statutes, is authorized to conduct any criminal investigation that occurs on property owned or leased by the department or involves matters over which the department has jurisdiction.

The testimony references included in this report are summations of oral or written statements provided to inspectors. Statements contained herein do not necessarily represent complete or certified transcribed testimony, except as noted. Unless specifically indicated otherwise, all interviews with witnesses, complainants, and subjects were audio or video recorded.

II. METHODOLOGY

The investigation reviewed the derivations of the allegation advanced by the complainant. The scope of this investigation does not seek to specifically address tort(s), but violations of criminal statutes. The criterion used to evaluate each contention or allegation was limited to the following standard of analysis:

1. Did the subject's action or behavior violate Florida criminal statutes?

III. ANALYSIS

The standard and analysis in this investigation is predicated with the burden of proving any violation of law, established by probable cause. The evidence considered for analysis is confined to the facts and allegations stated or reasonably implied. The actions or behavior of the subject are presumed to be lawful and in compliance with the applicable Florida law, unless probable cause indicates the contrary.



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IV. DEFINITIONS

Unfounded:

Refers to a disposition of a criminal case for which probable cause does not exist to suggest the suspect's behavior or action occurred nor is an arrest or formal charge being initiated.

Closed by Arrest:

Refers to a disposition of a criminal case for which probable cause exists that an identified subject committed the offense and one for which an arrest or formal prosecution has been initiated.

Exceptionally Cleared:

Refers to a disposition of a criminal case for which probable cause exists that an identified suspect committed the offense, but one for which an arrest or formal charge is not initiated, or in the case of a death investigation, one for which no evidence exists that the death was the result of a crime or neglect.

Open-Inactive:

Refers to a disposition of a criminal case for which a criminal investigation commenced, but where evidence is insufficient to close as unfounded, closed by arrest, or exceptionally cleared.

Investigative Assist Closed

Refers to a disposition of an investigative assist, where the conduct being investigated by the outside agency did not concern allegations against a Department employee, contractor, inmate, offender, or other person either employed or under the supervision of the Department.



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V. PREDICATE

On or about December 1, 2018, the Department of Corrections, Office of the Inspector General received notification alleging Inmate Almus Willis #K72701 [REDACTED] at Holmes Correctional Institution. [REDACTED] and Inmate Willis was pronounced deceased on December 1, 2018, at approximately 10:16 p.m. Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) notification was made, and Inspector Mai Morris responded to Holmes Correctional Institution on December 2, 2018, to provide investigative assistance to FDLE. FDLE assigned case number is PE-37-0160.

This case was reassigned to Senior Inspector Janine Knight on December 28, 2018.

VI. SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS

Based on the record as a whole, presented or available to the primary inspector, the following findings of facts were determined:

On December 1, 2019, Senior Inspector Mai Morris was advised Inmate Willis had been pronounced deceased [REDACTED] at Holmes Correctional Institution. SI Morris responded and assisted Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Special Agent Chad Dickson with his investigation.

Review of Video:

SI Morris reviewed video from Holmes CI, [REDACTED]-dormitory and observed:

- 8:56 p.m. – Inmate Willis was observed in H-dormitory, Wing 3. His gait appeared unsteady. He got a drink of water from the dayroom fountain and conversed with several inmates in the wing.
- 9:03 p.m. – Inmate Willis entered H3-115.
- [REDACTED] – Master roster count began and inmates were secured in their cells. Inmate Willis’ cellmate, Inmate Marjesta Kingcade DC# B07487, was present in the cell with Willis during count.
- [REDACTED] – Master roster count cleared and the doors were opened, at which time, Inmate Kingcade exited H3-115 and alerted security staff.
- 10:00 p.m. – Sergeant Logan Edenfield [REDACTED] [REDACTED] responded [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. Inmate Willis was transferred to the HCI [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

A copy of video was placed on disk and deposited with a chain of custody form into the temporary storage locker to be maintained as evidence item #1.

Review of FDLE Final report for PE-37-0160:

On April 1, 2019, FDLE received a copy of autopsy and toxicology reports for Inmate Willis from the 14th District Medical Examiner’s Office. Upon review of the Autopsy Report #2018-MLA-0513, it was noted Inmate Willis’ Manner of death was: Accident and his Cause of Death: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] listed the following:

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Investigator Note: Autopsy and Toxicology reports are attached to this report.

During the course of the FDLE investigation, [REDACTED] as a result of use of force or foul play were found. All other investigative actions have been taken and all of the information gathered indicated that Inmate Willis' death was the result of taking a contraband substance.

No further investigative activity is warranted by FDLE and FDLE does not maintain any evidence in this investigation.

SI Knight reviewed the investigation completed by FDLE, and administrative issues were not identified.

No additional violations of Florida State Statutes, Department policies or procedures were noted during this investigation. No further actions are warranted at this time by the Office of the Inspector General.

VII. CHARGES

- **NA- In custody death deemed accidental due to synthetic cannabinoids toxicity**

VIII. CONCLUSION

Based on the information gathered during their investigation, it is the recommendation of FDLE Special Agent Jared Nichols the investigation into the death of Inmate Almus Willis DC#K72701 be deemed accidental and this case be termed as follows:

- **Investigative Assist Closed**