

Florida Department of Corrections



Office of the Inspector General

**CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION
INVESTIGATIVE ASSIST
CASE # 16-13461**



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



Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----------|
| I. AUTHORITY | 4 |
| II. METHODOLOGY..... | 4 |
| III. ANALYSIS..... | 4 |
| IV. DEFINITIONS | 5 |
| V. PREDICATE | 6 |
| VI. SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS..... | 6 |
| VII. CHARGES..... | 7 |
| VIII. CONCLUSION..... | 7 |



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



Case Number: 16-13461

OIG Inspector: Inspector Lee Manning

Outside Agency: Florida Department of Law Enforcement

Outside Agency Investigator: Special Agent Lonnie Mills

Date Assigned or Initiated: 07-13-2016

Complaint Against: N/A

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

Complainant: N/A

Outside Agency Case #: JA-37-0118

Use of Force Number: N/A

PREA Number: N/A

Classification of Incident: Investigative Assist – Inmate Death (Suicide)

Confidential Medical Information Included: Yes No

Whistle-Blower Investigation: Yes No

Chief Inspector General Case Number: N/A



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



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.



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



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.



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



V. PREDICATE

On July 9, 2016, at 8:30PM, Inmate James Eddy, DC# R17974 was discovered by security staff [REDACTED] with a ligature tied around his neck and inside his assigned cell at Union Correctional Institution. A cell breach was conducted at which time Inmate Eddy [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was initiated by staff. [REDACTED] At 9:12 [REDACTED] pronounced Inmate Eddy deceased. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) was contacted and advised agents would be responding and assuming lead investigative authority regarding the death of Inmate Eddy. Management Information Notes System (MINS) #711696 was entered and assigned as an agency assist to Inspector Lee Manning on July 13, 2016.

VI. SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS

Based on the exhibits, witnesses' testimony, subject officer's statements, and the record as a whole, presented or available to the primary inspector, the following findings of facts were determined:

On July 9, 2016, this writer was dispatched to Union Correctional Institution (UCI) in reference to the unattended death of Inmate James Eddy, DC# R17974. Preliminary notification by security personnel reported at 8:34 PM, Correctional Officer Michael Nigh discovered Inmate Eddy [REDACTED] in confinement cell O2-108 with a ligature tied around his neck. Officer Nigh initiated the Incident Command System and requested assistance. Once assistance arrived, the cell was breached and the ligature was removed from Inmate Eddy's neck. Cardi [REDACTED]. At 8:55 PM, [REDACTED] arrived and relieved medical staff performing CPR. CPR continued and was unsuccessful at reviving Inmate Eddy. At 9:12 PM, Inmate Eddy was pronounced deceased [REDACTED]

While en route, I was contacted by Special Agent Mandy Spurlin who advised the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) would be dispatching Agents from FDLE to UCI and would be assuming lead investigative authority over the unattended death of Inmate Eddy.

Upon arrival, I met with Lieutenant Douglas Hart and obtained the location the decedent as well as his housing location in confinement. Lieutenant Hart advised both locations were secured with staff and a crime scene log initiated for both. I obtained the identifying information regarding all staff involved. I also requested the fixed wing video for all areas where video was available and capturing the events.

FDLE Special Agents Greg Holycross, Lonnie Mills and Michelle O'Neal arrived and were briefed regarding the above information. The staff information and fixed wing video was provided. Agents Mills, Spurlin, Holycross and O'Neal conducted interviews of all staff involved at the institution.

Inmate Eddy's body was examined by Agents Mills and Holycross. The body of Inmate Eddy released to transport to the medical examiner's office. Inmate Eddy [REDACTED] with possible foul play.

Agent's Mills and Holycross examined Inmate Eddy's assigned cell and it was released to security. The ligature used by Inmate Eddy was collected by FDLE as evidence.



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
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INVESTIGATIVE ASSIST SUMMARY REPORT



Agent Mills provided FDLE Case Number JA-37-0118.

On December 6, 2017, Agent Holycross provided a copy of the investigative report from FDLE closing their investigation. The investigative report reflects that there was no evidence of abuse or foul play. The autopsy conducted on Inmate Eddy by the medical examiner's office found that Inmate Eddy died of suicide as a result [REDACTED]

A report of post mortem examination was received from the 8th District Medical Examiner's Office. Doctor William Hamilton documented Inmate Eddy's manner of death as Suicide and the cause of death was documented as, [REDACTED]

There was no evidence found during this investigation to suggest administrative violations may have occurred.

VII. CHARGES

1. **NONE**

VIII. CONCLUSION

Based on the information gathered during their investigation, it is the recommendation of FDLE Special Agent Lonnie Mills the case be closed as the death of Inmate Eddy was determined to be by act of suicide [REDACTED].

INVESTIGATIVE ASSIST CLOSED

Inspector Lee Manning reviewed the investigation completed by FDLE. There was no evidence found during this investigation to suggest administrative violations may have occurred.