

Florida Department of Corrections



Office of the Inspector General

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

Case # 17-19375



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
CASE SUMMARY REPORT



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Case Number: 17-19375

Inspector: Inspector Travis Rimes

Date Assigned or Initiated: 10-27-2017

Complaint Against: N/A

Location of Incident – Institution/Facility/Office: Reception Medical Center

Complainant: N/A

Use of Force Number: N/A

PREA Number: N/A

Classification of Incident: (Death Investigation)

Confidential Medical Information Included: Yes No

Whistle-Blower Investigation: Yes No

Equal Employment Opportunity Investigation: Yes No

Chief Inspector General Case Number:



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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 a preponderance of the evidence exists to suggest the suspect's alleged behavior or action did not occur.

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.



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V. PREDICATE

On October 18, 2017 at approximately [REDACTED] Sergeant Steven Potosky reports That while assigned as K-dormitory(confinement) housing supervisor, while conducting a security check on wing 3, he discovered Inmate Christopher Potson DC# S14776 hanging from a ligature constructed from his state issued uniform pants, that was secured to the upper bunk of his cell. At approximately 9:09 PM the cell was breached and removed inmate Potson from the ligature and laid him on the floor. Sergeant Potosky [REDACTED] [REDACTED] al Officer Hawkins. At approximately 9:12 PM [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Inmate Poston was escorted t [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. This information was reported via the Management Information Notification System (MINS#814110) on October 18, 2017 and assigned as Criminal Case #17-19375 to Inspector Travis Rimes on October 27, 2017.

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 October 24, 2017, at approximately 8:06PM, while assigned as the on-call Inspector for District 5, I was contacted by On-Call Inspector Supervisor Maurice Radford and advised of a Death [REDACTED] of Inmate Christopher Poston DC# S14776 [REDACTED] (Reception Medical Center). At approximately 8:14 PM Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) was notified because, Inmate had been [REDACTED] from Reception Medical Center on October 19, 2019. Due to him being found by security staff hanging from his bunk in K-dorm with pair of state issued pants tied to his bunk. Special agent Mike McNeil advised that FDLE would not be responding. At approximately 9:16AM, I entered [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Terry McQuiddy [REDACTED] [REDACTED] she informed me that Inmate Poston, Christopher DC#S14776 housed in 11446-ICU [REDACTED] [REDACTED] due to Inmate Poston [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and that Inmate Poston [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Inmate Poston [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Ms. McQuiddy informed me that Inmate Poston's Mother (Paula Zynda) Inmate Poston's primary emergency contact signed a State of Authority/ consent for donation anatomical gift. [REDACTED] 11446, Officer P. Fullwood was providing security of Inmate Poston's body and a crime scene log had been initiated. I visually inspected and photographed the entire body of Inmate Potson. At approximately 10:30 PM, I released the body of Inmate Poston and the crime scene to Correctional Officer Poston.

Fixed wing video was reviewed and no violations of policy or procedures by security staff were identified.



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A review Inmate Potson' [REDACTED] that Inmate Poston's Mother (Paula Zynda) his primary emergency contact signed a State of Authority/ [REDACTED]. Inmate Poston's initial receipt date was September 20, 2017 and his current release date was July 30 2018.

A review of the notification of death for Inmate Potson revealed that the cause of death pending autopsy was listed [REDACTED] Inmate Poston [REDACTED] and that Inmate Poston [REDACTED] Inmate Poston [REDACTED] Inmate Poston was pronounced deceased [REDACTED] at 2:50am. Inmate Poston's initial receipt date was September 20, 2017 and his current release date was July 30 2018.

Inmate Potson's was serving a 13-month sentence. Inmate Potson had been housed at Reception Medical Center since September 20, 2017. Inmate Potson received a disciplinary report on October 18, 2017 and was placed in confinement (K3-117L) for Violation (4-3) - Being an unauthorized area, including housing, job, or any other assigned or designated area. Inmate Potson was scheduled for release July 30, 2018.

On February 8, 2018, the final autopsy report for Inmate Potson was received from the Gainesville Medical Examiner's Office. Lead Medical Examiner William F. Hamilton M.D. listed the probable cause of death [REDACTED]. Manner of death as Suicide.

VII. CHARGES

List alleged violations of Florida Law:

N/A

VIII. CONCLUSION

Based on the information gathered during this investigation and the Medical Examiner's findings, it is the recommendation of Inspector Travis Rimes that this investigation be termed as follows.

1. Exceptionally Cleared

No Administrative violations were noted