



Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

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March 29, 2016

Captain Jim Ortega, Commander
Sacramento County Sheriff's Department
Correctional Services Unit
651 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: In-Custody Death – Joshua Gonder
SSD Report No. 15-193389
Date of incident: August 1, 2015

Dear Captain Ortega:

The above case was referred to this office for review of the circumstances surrounding the August 1, 2015, death of inmate Joshua Gonder while in the Sacramento County Main Jail.

Gonder was booked into custody at the Main Jail on August 1, 2015, at 10:14 a.m. for public intoxication. He was eventually placed into a release cell at 1:13 p.m. and moved to a transportation cell at 5:00 p.m. Although Gonder was going to be released from custody, deputies were attempting to confirm the status of a misdemeanor domestic violence arrest warrant issued for him from Long Beach.

At approximately 6:51 p.m., Deputy William Fry was escorting inmates to a transportation cell. As he reached the cell door, he observed Gonder already sitting in the cell and facing the window. Gonder had no visible signs of distress and made eye contact with Deputy Fry. Deputy Fry escorted the other inmates to a different cell.

At approximately 7:07 pm., Deputy Kristina Coombs looked into Gonder's transportation cell and noticed that he was lying on his stomach on the floor with a torn t-shirt tied around his neck, and a pool of blood near his head. Deputy Coombs immediately dispatched for assistance. Deputy Sean Woodward arrived at the cell, cut the material from Gonder's neck with a pair of scissors, rolled him over, and began cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Gonder was unconscious, not breathing, and did not have a pulse. Deputy Coombs requested fire medics to respond. Other deputies arrived at the cell and moved Gonder into the elevator lobby to have more room for treatment. Deputies applied an automated external defibrillator, then continued with CPR. Fire medics arrived at approximately 7:15 p.m., continued CPR, and transported Gonder to Sutter General Hospital. At this time, Gonder had a pulse and was breathing with

assistance. Investigation concluded that Gonder covered the surveillance camera in the transportation cell with wet toilet paper. Gonder was pronounced deceased on August 2, 2015, at approximately 4:59 p.m.

The information reviewed shows that Mr. Gonder died as a result of a suicide from tying a torn t-shirt around his neck and losing consciousness. Pathologist Brian Nagao, M.D., conducted an autopsy and concluded that the cause of Gonder's death was neck compression. No evidence of criminal misconduct is presented or suggested in any of the supporting reports. The District Attorney's Office will not take any further action in this matter.

cc: Rick Braziel, Office of the Inspector General