



Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

ANNE MARIE SCHUBERT
District Attorney

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Chief Deputy

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 23, 2019

TO: Captain Charles Meeks, Commander
Sacramento County Sheriff's Department
Correctional Services Unit
651 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

RE: In-Custody Death – Tom Dean Korrell
SSD Report No. 17-75037
Date of Incident: March 8, 2017

The above case was referred to this office for review of the circumstances surrounding the March 8, 2017, death of inmate Tom Korrell while in the Sacramento County Main Jail.

On this date, Korrell and two other inmates, John Riffle and Ramon Gonzalez, were together in holding cell #4 at the jail. Gonzalez began pounding on the cell door and called out to deputies, "Hey, a guy just hung himself in here." Sacramento Sheriff Deputy Michael Matsui was on duty as an intake officer and ran to the cell door. He observed Korrell sitting next to the cell toilet with his back turned towards the door. Korrell was wearing a dark colored jacket with the hood on and dark jeans. Deputy Matsui also observed yellow material matching Korrell's shirt tied from the metal partition near the toilet and around Korrell's neck. Korrell was limp and not moving. Deputy Matsui requested assistance and instructed Gonzalez to get away from the door and sit on the bench.

Other deputies arrived and entered the cell, along with Deputy Matsui. The material attached to the partition was cut and Korrell was placed on the floor. Deputy Matsui held Gonzalez down on the bench because the inmate was screaming, shaking, and behaving irrationally. Gonzalez and Riffle were eventually removed from the cell. Deputies cut and removed the material around Korrell's neck and moved him to the hallway. They performed cardiopulmonary resuscitation, while nurses applied the Automatic External Defibrillator to Korrell.

Sacramento Fire Department and Medic personnel arrived and continued medical treatment. Korrell was pronounced deceased at approximately 1:42 a.m.

The entire incident was captured on a surveillance camera inside the cell. According to time stamps on the video, Korrell enters the cell with Gonzalez at approximately 11:46 p.m. A deputy escorts Riffle into the cell at approximately 12:14 a.m. While Gonzalez and Riffle are sleeping, Korrell takes off his jacket, sports jersey, and long-sleeve shirt. He rips the t-shirt he is wearing into a long strip and makes a ligature with the material. After putting his clothes back on, Korrell places the ligature in the wet sink and then ties it around his neck. He walks to the metal partition near the toilet, ties the other end of the ligature around a metal pole, kneels, and begins strangling himself at approximately 12:35 a.m. Korrell's body stops moving a few minutes later. Gonzalez eventually wakes up, observes Korrell, and alerts the deputies at approximately 1:20 a.m.

Forensic Pathologist Katherine Raven, M.D., conducted an autopsy and concluded the cause of Korrell's death was asphyxia due to hanging by ligature. The Sacramento County Coroner's Office classified the manner of death as suicide. The Sacramento County District Attorney's Laboratory of Forensic Services confirmed the presence of methamphetamine and nordiazepam in a sample of Korrell's blood. It was also concluded Korrell had a blood-alcohol level of .03%.

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: Sacramento Sheriff Lieutenant Gail Vasquez
Kimberly Gin, Sacramento County Coroner's Office
Office of the Inspector General