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Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

THIEN HO  
District Attorney

Date: April 17, 2023

To: Captain Vanessa Vaden, Commander  
Sacramento County Sheriff's Office  
Correctional Services Unit  
651 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

Re: In-Custody Death – Ronnie Dale Sandfer  
SSO Report No. 2022-22400  
Date of Incident – 02/07/2022

The above case was referred to this office for review of the circumstances surrounding the death of inmate Ronnie Dale Sandfer at Sutter Medical Center on February 7, 2022.

Sandfer was arrested and booked into the Sacramento County Main Jail on March 13, 2017. He was charged with a violation of California Penal Code section 220 (assault with intent to commit rape, sodomy, sexual penetration, or oral copulation).

On April 4, 2017, the Superior Court appointed a doctor to evaluate Sandfer's mental competency to stand trial pursuant to Penal Code section 1368.

On June 6, 2017, Sandfer was found incompetent to stand trial.

On July 18, 2017, Sandfer was committed to Napa State Hospital for treatment of restoration to competency.

On November 12, 2019, Sandfer was returned to the Main Jail from the State Hospital. Criminal proceedings were reinstated. Sandfer was housed on the medical/psychiatric floor at the Main Jail under the care of medical and psychiatric staff.

On January 24, 2022, Sandfer complained to medical staff of chest pains and was transported to Sutter Medical Center. At the hospital, Sandfer tested positive for COVID-19. Despite receiving treatment, Sandfer's condition worsened.

On February 7, 2022, Sandfer was pronounced deceased.

The Sacramento County Coroner's Office concluded that based on the nature of Sandfer's death, an autopsy would not be conducted. The death certificate listed Sandfer's cause of death as acute hypoxemic respiratory failure, septic shock, acute respiratory distress syndrome, and COVID. The death certificate also stated cirrhosis was a significant health condition that contributed to Mr. Sandfer's death.

No evidence of criminal misconduct is presented or suggested in any of the supporting reports. Accordingly, the District Attorney's Office will take no further action in this matter.

Cc: Sacramento County Sheriff's Office Lieutenant Janae Galovich  
Kimberly Gin, Sacramento County Coroner's Office  
Francine Tournour, Sacramento County Office of Inspector General