KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL of TEXAS

CUSTODIAL DEATH REPORT

Agency Information

CDR Number:	19-1007-UF	Version Type:	ORIGINAL VERSION
Report Date:	10/5/2019 11:39 AM	Status:	Submitted

Agency/Facility Information

Agency Name:	Milam County Sheriff's Office	Agency Address:	512 N. Jefferson, Suite A
Agency City:	Cameron	Agency State:	TX
Agency Zip:	76520		

Director Information

Director Salutation:	Sheriff	Director First Name:	Donald
Director Middle Name:	C.		
Director Last Name:	White		
Reporter Name:	Donald White	Reporter Email:	cwhite@milamcounty.net

Decedent Information

Identity of Deceased

First Name: Jason

Middle Name: Earl

Last Name: Merritt

Suffix:

Date of Birth: 9/7/1985 Sex: Male

Race: Anglo or White

Age At Time Of Death: 34

Date/Time of Custody (arrest, incarceration) (mm/dd/yyyy hh:mm AM/PM):

Date/Time of Custody or Incident: 10/4/2019 4:04 PM

Date/Time of Death (mm/dd/yyyy hh:mm AM/PM):

Death Date and Time: 10/4/2019 4:34 PM

Manner / Cause of Death

Has a medical examiner or coroner conducted an evaluation to determine a cause of death?

Medical Examiner/Coroner Evaluation?: No, evaluation not planned

What was the manner of death? (select only one)

Manner of Death: Suicide

Medical Cause of Death:

Medical Cause of Death:

Self-inflicted gun-shot wound to the head.

Had the decedent been receiving treatment for the medical condition that caused the death after admission to your jail's jurisdiction?

Medical Treatment: Not Applicable

If death was an accident, homicide or suicide, who caused the death?

Who caused the death?: Decedent

If a weapon caused the death, what type of weapon caused the death? (Hold CTRL to select all that apply)

Type of weapon that caused death?: Handgun

Was the cause of death the result of a pre-existing medical condition or did the decedent develop the condition after admission?

Pre existing medical condition?: Not Applicable; cause of death was accidental injury, intoxication, suicide or homicide

If death was an accident, homicide or suicide, what was the means of death?

Means of Death: Firearm

Location / Custody Information

Where did the event causing the death occur?

Street Address:	17790 FM 486 North	City:	Cameron
County:	Milam	Zip:	76520

What location category best describes where the event causing the death occurred?

Location Category: Roadway/highway/street/sidewalk

What type of custody/facility was the Decedent in at the time of death:

Type of Custody: Pre-Custodial Use of Force

Specific type of custody/facility:

Specific Type of Custody/Facility:

Custody of Law Enforcement Personnel subsequent to arrest

What was the time and date of the deceased's entry into the law enforcement facility where the death occurred (mm/dd/yyyy hh:mm AM/PM):

Entry Date Time:

Entry Date Time N/A: ☑

Where did the death occur?

Death Location: Scene of incident

General Information

Did any other law enforcement agencies respond to calls for service related to this incident?

Other Agencies Respond?: Yes

What were the most serious offense(s) with which the deceased was (or would have been) charged with at the time of death?

Offense 1:

Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon

Offense 2:

Offense 3:

Were the Charges:: Not filed at time of death

What were the types of charges or reason for contact? (Hold CTRL to select all that apply)

Type of Offense: Violent Crime Against Persons

At any time during the incident and/or entry into the law enforcement facility, did the decedent display or use a weapon?

Decedent display/use of weapons: Yes, mark all that apply

Decedent Display or Use Weapon Details: Discharged firearm

At any time during the incident and/or entry into the law enforcement facility, did the decedent:

Attempt to Injure Others?: No

At any time during the incident and/or entry into the law enforcement facility, did the decedent:

Appear intoxicated (alcohol or drugs): No

Make suicidal statements?: No

Exhibit any mental health problems?: No

Exhibit any medical problems?: No

At any time during the incident and/or entry into the law enforcement facility, did the decedent:

Barricade self or initiate standoff?:	Yes	Resist being handcuffed or arrested?:	Yes
Physically attempt/assault officer(s):	No	Gain possession of officer's weapon:	No
Verbally threaten other(s) including law:	Yes	Escape or attempt to escape/flee custody:	No
Attempt gain possession officer's weapon:	No		

Was the deceased under restraint in the time leading up to the death or the events causing the death?

Under Restraint:	No

Summary of Incident

Summary of How the Death Occurred: (max. 30,000 characters)

Summary:

It was reported that the decedent was suspected of shooting a person in the head at a location in an adjacent county. At 14:38 hours, Bell County Sheriff's Office notified the Milam County Sheriff's Office that the decedent had made threats that he would travel to one or two locations in Milam County in order to shoot or kill a subject associated with their investigation. Milam County Deputies and Texas Highway Patrol Troopers checked the areas listed which included the address 17790 FM 486 North and an address on 15th Street in Cameron, both locations in Milam County, Texas.

At approximately 15:56 hours, Deputies locate the decedent traveling in his vehicle north-bound on FM 486 North, at 16:02 hours Deputies attempted to stop the decedent for investigative purposes, by activating emergency lights and siren, however the decedent failed to yield and continued north-bound on FM 486. The decedent traveled approximately 1.5 miles further and pulled into the driveway at the 17790 FM 486 North address.
At 16:04 hours, the decedent parked in the driveway of residence he had made threats earlier to harm persons at. Milam County Sheriff's Deputies and Texas Highway Patrol Troopers tried to establish some form of productive communication with the decedent in order to safely restrain him. For approximately thirty minutes the decedent refused to comply with commands to show his hands and step out of the vehicle or to simply communicate with peace officers on the scene.

At 16:34 hours, the decedent appeared to reach for an object; he was then observed placing a pistol to the right side of his head and a single gun-shot was heard. The decedent could be seen bleeding profusely from the gunshot wound as peace officers quickly approached the vehicle from their defensive positions. The windows to the vehicle were rolled up all the way, the doors were locked, and the vehicle was running with the transmission in park. The driver's door window was broken and the electric door locks were disengaged. The semi-automatic pistol used by the decedent to commit suicide was lying in the decedent's lap, as were

the decedent's hands. The firearm was removed from the decedent's lap and the decedent was assessed for first aid actions. It was determined that the wound was of a nature that would not support life and there was no visible or physical sign of life or a pulse as checked by peace officers on the scene.

The decedent was viewed by Milam County Precinct 4 Justice of the Peace at 17:04 hours at declared deceased a few minutes later during the Justice's inquest procedures.