KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL of TEXAS

CUSTODIAL DEATH REPORT

Agency Information

CDR Number:	20-1949-CJ	Version Type:	ORIGINAL VERSION
Report Date:	7/26/2021 12:08 PM	Status:	Submitted

Agency/Facility Information

Agency Name:	Leon County Sheriff's Dept.	Agency Address:	PO BOX 278
Agency City:	Centerville	Agency State:	TX
Agency Zip:	758333		

Director Information

Director Salutation:	Sheriff	Director First Name:	Kevin
Director Middle Name:			
Director Last Name:	Ellis		
Reporter Name:	Kevin Ellis	Reporter Email:	kevin.ellis@co.leon.tx.us

Decedent Information

Identity of Deceased

First Name: Dakota

Middle Name: Eugene

Last Name: Belknap

Suffix:

Date of Birth: 3/28/1997 Sex: Male

Race: Anglo or White

Age At Time Of Death: 23

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

Date/Time of Custody or Incident: 7/26/2020 6:52 PM

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

Death Date and Time: 12/17/2020 10:17 AM

Manner / Cause of Death

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

Medical Examiner/Coroner Evaluation?: Yes, results are available

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

Manner of Death: Suicide

Medical Cause of Death:

Medical Cause of Death:

Death by asphyxiation.

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

Medical Treatment: No

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?: Other Weapon,
specify:

Other weapon, specify:

Bed Linen

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: Hanging, strangulation

Location / Custody Information

Where did the event causing the death occur?

Street Address:	606 East Saint Mary's St.	City:	Centerville
County:	Leon	Zip:	75833

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

Location Category:	Law Enforcement Facility

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

Type of Custody:	County Jail

Specific type of custody/facility:

Specific Type of Custody/Facility:
Jail - single cell

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:	12/14/2020 2:45 PM

Where did the death occur?

Death Location:	Medical facility

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:

AGG ASSAULT W/DEADLY WEAPON

Offense 2:

Offense 3:

Were the Charges:: Filed

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: No

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?: Yes

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

Barricade self or initiate standoff?:	No	Resist being handcuffed or arrested?:	No
Physically attempt/assault officer(s):	No	Gain possession of officer's weapon:	No
Verbally threaten other(s) including law:	No	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:

CASE # 204564

DATE: December 15th, 2020

LOCATION: 606 West Saint Mary's, Centerville

OFFENSE: N/A

OFFICER(S): Deputy Jerry Nichols
Jailer Tisha Spinks
Sgt. Jailer Harry Vaskike
Deputy John Flemmons
Sgt. Deputy Michael Merchant
Chief Deputy Brent Walter

VICTIM: Dakota Belknap (W/M DOB: 03-28-1997)

SUSPECT: N/A

SCENE SUMMARY:

This scene is described as a one story jail facility located at 606 East Saint Mary's, Centerville. The incident occurred at cell number 148 located at the area of the Northwest end of the jail. Weather and lighting was not a factor in this case.

INTRODUCTION:

On December 15th, 2020, at approximately 5:57PM, I, Deputy Jerry Nichols, was dispatched to 606 West Saint Mary's, Centerville, (Leon County Sheriff's Office) in reference to a medical emergency about an inmate hanging himself.

DETAILS:

Upon arrival, I observed Leon County Jailer Sergeant Harry Vanskike in front of the lobby door outside the sheriff's office. I asked Vanskike if the individual was "gone" at which he advised that the individual was "gone".

I entered the Leon County Sheriff's Office lobby. Prior to me entering the jail door, I activated my body camera to record. I entered the jail and observed Jailers, Tisha Spinks, Toby Winn, and Marya Cabrera. I asked where the individual was at which Jailer Spinks stated that he was in the back in the cell. I then followed Jailer Spinks to cell # 148. Jailer Spinks contacted dispatch on the intercom to open the cell door. The dispatcher then unlocked the door.

I entered the cell at approximately 6:06 PM which I did not observe anyone in the cell other than a body laying on the North East end of the cell on the floor. The head of the individual was pointing South West and the feet were on the South West. I observed the individual laying on his back with his eyes open at which was not blinking, and his pupils were dilated. Belknap's head was toward the Belknap's face was blue in color. The body of the individual was laying next to the cell bunk beds. I then observed a sheet that was orange in color hanging from the top post at the North corner of the bed.

I then asked Jailer Spinks what happened. Jailer Spinks stated that she was making her routine rounds to check on the other individuals. Jailer Spinks stated that she looked in the glass window of the cell and observed the individual with the sheet around his neck. Jailer Spinks stated that the individual was on his knees facing downward toward the ground. Jailer Spinks stated that she then ran to advise Sgt. Jailer Vanskike of the incident. They the ran back to the cell at which Sgt. Jailer Vaskike untied and pulled the individual off of the sheet and laid him on the ground.

At approximately 6:08, Sgt. Jailer Vanskike then entered the cell as I was taking photographs.

At approximately 6:09, EMTs Marcus Turek, and Katherine Faulk arrived in the cell and began CPR. The EMT's placed an automatic CPR apparatus on the individual.

Deputy John Flemmons and Patrol Sgt. Michael Merchant arrived. Deputy J. Flemmons began assisting EMTs with the individual.

Leon County Deputy Chief Brent Walter entered the cell and began taking photographs.

After taking photographs, Sgt. M. Merchant cut the sheet off of the bed. The sheet was then photographed and placed in a evidence bag. Patrol Sgt. M. Merchant assisted me with collecting evidence.

After I bagged the evidence, I heard the EMT state that they received a strong pulse. I then assisted EMT placing the individual on the gurney.

As EMT was walking the individual out, I collected the evidence and left the scene.

After returning to my office, I placed the evidence in locker #12.

DISPOSITION:

Case remains active pending further investigation.

BODY CAMERA: YES