KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL of TEXAS

CUSTODIAL DEATH REPORT

Agency Information

CDR Number:	24-1229-C	Version Type:	AMENDED
Report Date:	8/21/2024 1:58 PM	Status:	Submitted

Agency/Facility Information

Agency Name:	San Marcos Police Dept.	Agency Address:	2300 S. IH-35
Agency City:	San Marcos	Agency State:	TX
Agency Zip:	78666		

Director Information

Director Salutation:	Chief	Director First Name:	Stan
Director Middle Name:			
Director Last Name:	Standridge		
Reporter Name:	Bob Klett	Reporter Email:	bklett@sanmarcostx.gov

Decedent Information

Identity of Deceased

First Name: Dennis

Middle Name: Ryan

Last Name: Thornton

Suffix:

Date of Birth: 3/5/1981 Sex: Male

Race: Anglo or White

Age At Time Of Death: 43

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

Date/Time of Custody or Incident: 8/6/2024 7:11 PM

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

Death Date and Time: 8/6/2024 8:20 PM

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: Accidental

Medical Cause of Death:

Medical Cause of Death:

Decedent was called in for welfare on side of interstate. He was taken into custody with taser having to be used. He was taken to ER for continuation of welfare concern. He was tended to by medical staff in ER and found to have a 107.9 temperature. He would later code in the ER and CPR was unsuccessful. Initial indications are there was potentially drug/alcohol abuse in the 24 hours prior.

Autopsy: Toxic effects of methamphetamine with other contributing conditions of hypertensive cardiovascular disease.

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?: Not Applicable

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?: Pre-existing medical condition

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

Means of Death: Other, specify

Means of Death Other: Toxic effects of methamphetamine

Location / Custody Information

Where did the event causing the death occur?

Street Address: 200 MM IH 35 SB

City: San Marcos

County: Hays

Zip: 78666

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: Police Custody (pre-booking)

Specific type of custody/facility:

Specific Type of Custody/Facility:

Hospital/Infirmary

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: Medical facility

General Information

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

Other Agencies Respond?:	No

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:
Primarily no offense, protective custody/welfare	
	Offense 2:
Potentially, public intoxication	
	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:	Medical / Mental Health assistance call

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?:	Yes (select all that apply)

Ways Decedent Attempted To Injure Others:	Attempted to injure civilian(s) or other inmate(s)

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

Appear intoxicated (alcohol or drugs):	Yes	Make suicidal statements?:	No
Exhibit any mental health problems?:	Yes	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?:	Yes
Physically attempt/assault officer(s):	Yes	Gain possession of officer's weapon:	No
Verbally threaten other(s) including law:	No	Escape or attempt to escape/flee custody:	Yes
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:	Yes, mark which restraint devices were used

Type of restraint

Type of Restraint:	Handcuffs; Other device, specify
Other device, specify:	Wrap restraint, in an upright and seated position

Summary of Incident

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

Summary:

At approximately 1905 hours officers responded to the area of the 200 northbound mile marker of IH 35 in San Marcos, Hays County, Texas in reference to a call for service regarding a male on the highway. There were several complainants reporting that the male, described as in his 40s wearing a black shirt, gray or tan shorts, medium build, with short brown hair and a beard of goatee, was running on the highway. Complainants also reported that the subject appeared that he wanted to jump into traffic, jump off the bridge, was throwing items off the highway, had his legs off the edge at one point, and was attempting to strike vehicles with a bag that he had.

Officer arrived and began attempting to establish a rapport with Mr. Thornton by speaking with him and asking him his name. After a short time, Mr. Thornton aggressively rushed at officer while yelling. Officer took several steps back to make distance because he was unsure if Mr. Thornton had any kind of weapons on him. Officer was also worried he would attempt to get in a physical altercation with him and one or both of them would end up in a lane of traffic and get struck by a vehicle.

Mr. Thornton was tased after being non-compliant and taken into custody after a several minutes struggle. He was placed in a wrap device where he could be in a seated position for transport to ER for evaluation with the AC turned on high. He was handed over to ER care and found to have a temperature on 107.9 degrees. After about 20 minutes in the ER his condition began to get worse. ER staff would eventually begin CPR and advanced lifesaving efforts but were unsuccessful.

Investigation reveals potential alcohol and drug abuse in the previous 24 hours. Autopsy results pending.

Update 01282025 - Autopsy report details updated, accidental death due to toxic effects of methamphetamine with other contributing conditions of hypertensive cardiovascular disease.