

In-Custody Death Investigation of Brad Jennings

Seattle Police Department
Force Investigation Team #2020FIT-0005



King County Prosecuting Attorney
Public Integrity Team

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DECLINE MEMORANDUM

In-Custody Death of Brad Jennings

WARNING – This memorandum contains images and descriptions of violence that may be offensive and disturbing to some readers. The images and descriptions are included to provide the reader with the most accurate information regarding the topic of this memorandum.

I. FACTUAL SUMMARY:

The subject, Brad Curtis Jennings, was a 40-year-old male. On Jan. 29, 2020, he was charged with attempted robbery in the first degree in cause no. 20-1-00276-0 SEA and, once arrested, held in King County Jail in lieu of \$250,000 bail.

On Feb. 28, 2020, at approximately 2:39 A.M., King County Jail Corrections Officer 1 conducted a security check and observed subject Jennings alive in his jail cell (4E11E LC Cell #1). At that time, subject Jennings was then in general population, but on “Yellow” status, which means that the patient has known and documented mental health conditions and requires a higher level of care. Just prior to his death he was taken off of “Red” status, also known as suicide watch.

At approximately 2:57 A.M., Corrections Officer 1 and Jail Health Services (JHS) Nurse 1 went to provide inmates with medications and found subject Jennings unconscious and unresponsive. They observed a ligature around the subject’s neck fashioned out of a bed sheet that was attached to the table in his cell. Subject Jennings had wrapped the ligature around his neck, and leaned forward parallel to the ground far enough that he could hang himself. JHS Nurse 1 and Corrections Officer 1 then pulled subject Jennings out of his cell into the day room area and initiated CPR. Corrections Officer 2 called for a Medical Status III, which is an unconscious or unresponsive inmate in need of immediate medical attention. Numerous COs and nurses responded to the scene and assisted in life-saving efforts.



Figure 1: Photo of the death scene. Depicted are the ligature and the table the ligature was wrapped around.

At approximately 3:02 A.M., the Seattle Fire Department (SFD) was called to the scene.

Upon arrival, SFD personnel took over life-saving efforts. SFD continued CPR and IV drug intervention but after no change in subject Jennings' condition, SFD ceased life-saving efforts and at approximately 3:28 A.M., subject Jennings was pronounced deceased.

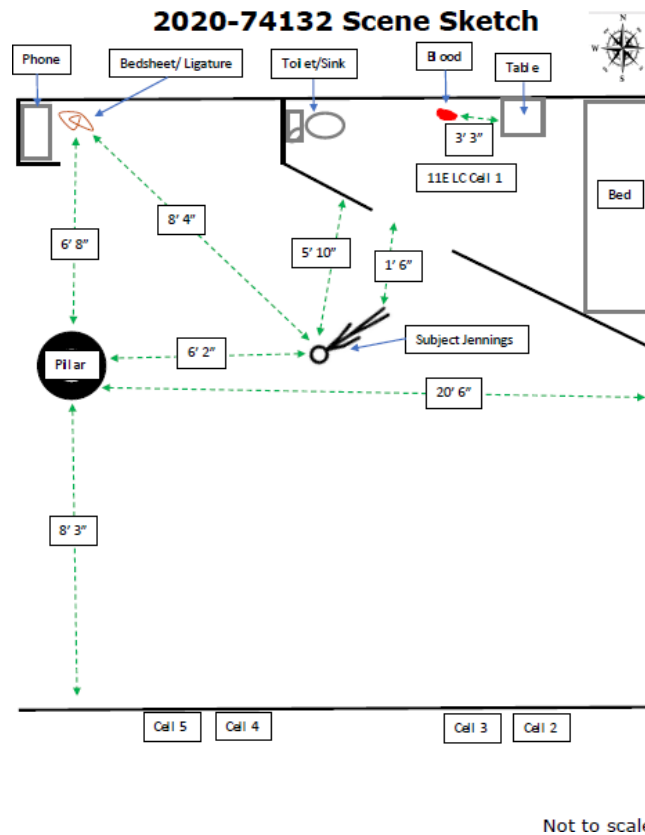


Figure 2: Death scene sketch. The subject is depicted in the dayroom where he was moved in order to provide him life-saving treatment. The location of his death is in the upper right hand corner between the notations "table" and "blood."

After an autopsy was complete, the medical examiner opined that the cause of death is asphyxia due to ligature hanging. The manner of death is suicide.

Inmate 1 was interviewed after the subject's death. Inmate 1 was housed in 4ELC Cell #2, directly across from subject Jennings' cell. Inmate 1 stated that on Feb. 27, 2020, at approximately 11:30 P.M., he heard subject Jennings crying. Inmate 1 stated that subject Jennings said that he was suicidal. He saw subject Jennings pacing back and forth with a sheet around his neck. He tried talking with subject Jennings, but subject Jennings told him, "Just go to sleep." At 11:45 P.M. Inmate 1 stated that he pushed the call button to speak with jail guards about Jennings, but did not receive a response so he went to sleep.¹ Inmate 1 stated that he went to sleep and awoke to jail staff performing CPR on subject Jennings. According to the jail, no records are kept when the call

¹ KCJ did not have any cameras positioned either inside the dayroom, or in or around the subject's jail cell.

button is pushed, but the security log shows that Corrections Officer 1 did a general security check of the cell block at 11:45 P.M and answered a request from the inmate in a nearby cell a few minutes later at 11:49 P.M.

Nurse 1 was also interviewed by investigators. She said the subject had previously made suicidal threats in her presence. This is supported by jail health records. On Feb. 17, 2020, the subject admitted to Nurse 1 that he asked his roommate to kill him. The subject was then transferred to “Red” status. On Feb. 18, 2020, the subject's status was downgraded to yellow status after a subsequent medical exam. He then was placed back in the general population where he was housed until his death.² On Feb. 20, 2020, during a mental health assessment the subject told Nurse 1, "I feel very suicidal, I really need to be started on medication." On Feb. 25, 2020, the subject was prescribed Zoloft. On Feb. 26, 2020, the subject requested a bible and “Chaplain/Religious Services” in a Service Request Kite to jail staff.

II. LEGAL ANALYSIS:

The King County Medical Examiner ruled Mr. Jennings’ death to be a suicide. There is no evidence to call that conclusion into question. As a result, no criminal charges are appropriate.

III. INQUEST RECOMMENDATION:

After a careful review of these materials, we are satisfied that the investigation is now complete. Pursuant to Executive Order PHL-7-1-5-EO, we recommend an inquest be initiated because we have not identified any factors or circumstances under §6.1, or any other reasons, that indicate that an inquest is not warranted.

² “Red” status is suicide watch, the subject is required to be check every 15 minutes and they are only allowed to have a suicide prevention blanket and smock. “Yellow” status means that the patient has known and documented mental health conditions and require a higher level of care.