



SAN DIEGO COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Critical Incident Review Board

In-Custody Death Information Release

DATE OF INCIDENT: March 14, 2021

TIME: 10:52 a.m.

LOCATION: Vista Detention Facility

The Sheriff's Homicide Unit conducts a thorough investigation of every in-custody death. In addition to the investigation conducted by the Sheriff's Homicide Unit, the Sheriff's Critical Incident Review Board (CIRB) conducts a review of in-custody deaths. The CIRB is comprised of department leadership and the Sheriff's Legal Advisor and performs a critical review of each incident. The focus of the CIRB is to assess the department's civil exposure because of a given incident. The review may identify potential misconduct, criminal negligence or behavior, policy violations, training deficiencies, or other areas where we can improve and make our facilities safer for staff and those in our custody. This release synthesizes the reviewed incident and any resultant actions taken to improve our operations.

On March 14, 2021, at about 10:52 a.m., while conducting a safety check of the North House housing unit at the Vista Detention Facility, a Sheriff's deputy found Incarcerated Person Louis Gomez unresponsive inside a cell. Gomez was housed with another incarcerated person at the time. Deputies initiated cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), administered Naloxone, and summoned medical staff. Sheriff's medical staff arrived at about 10:54 a.m. to assist with lifesaving measures, including applying an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), providing supplemental oxygen, and administering additional doses of Naloxone.

At about 11:04 a.m., Vista Fire Department (VFD) personnel arrived and took over lifesaving measures. Despite the efforts of Sheriff's medical staff and emergency responders, a doctor pronounced Luis Gomez deceased at 11:19 a.m.

As is the protocol for all in-custody deaths, the San Diego Sheriff's Homicide Unit investigated this incident and documented the scene.

The San Diego County Medical Examiner's Office conducted an independent investigation and post-mortem. The Medical Examiner's Office determined the cause of death to be "COVID-19 pneumonia," and the manner of death to be "natural." (ME Case #2021-0961)

The CIRB conducted a review of this incident on September 15, 2021, with no action items or policy recommendations at that time.