



SAN DIEGO COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Critical Incident Review Board

In-Custody Death Information Release

DATE OF INCIDENT: June 28, 2023

TIME: 10:06 a.m.

LOCATION: University of California San Diego (UCSD) Medical Center Hillcrest (San Diego Central Jail)

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 June 26, 2023, at about 6:58 p.m., while conducting a safety check of a housing unit at the San Diego Central Jail, Sheriff's deputies found Incarcerated Person Pedro Ornelas unresponsive, with no pulse, and not breathing. Ornelas was inside his assigned cell and was the sole occupant. Deputies immediately initiated cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), summoned Sheriff's medical staff, and called for a 911 response. At about 7:03 p.m., Sheriff's medical staff arrived to assist with lifesaving measures, including applying an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and providing oxygen supplemented rescue breathing.

At about 7:09 p.m., San Diego Fire Department personnel arrived and took over lifesaving measures including the application of a Lund University Cardiopulmonary Assist System (LUCAS) CPR machine. Emergency responders were eventually able to detect a pulse and Ornelas was transported to UCSD Medical Center Hillcrest. Ornelas continued treatment at the hospital, and family was able to be with him. Despite the efforts of emergency responders and hospital staff, a doctor pronounced Pedro Ornelas deceased on June 28, 2023, at 10:06 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 determined the cause of Ornelas' death was "anoxic-ischemic

encephalopathy due to resuscitated cardiopulmonary arrest, due to asphyxia, due to hanging" and the manner was "suicide." (ME Case #2023-2092)

The CIRB conducted a preliminary review of this incident on August 16, 2023, with no action items or policy recommendations at that time.