

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Update on San Diego Sheriff In-Custody Death Investigation

This is an update on the in-custody death investigation from March 2, 2024. It includes identifications as well as information that has been learned or confirmed since the investigation began, including two prior radio calls involving the decedent.

On March 2, 2024, at approximately 9:11 PM, Carlsbad Police responded to a radio call at a restaurant in the 900 block of Carlsbad Village Drive. According to the reporting party, a Black male asked him to call for an ambulance for an unknown reason. Carlsbad Police located the subject of the radio call and determined the call was medical only.

Paramedics transported the male to Scripps Encinitas.

At approximately 10:55 PM, San Diego Sheriffs responded to a radio call from Scripps Encinitas to check the area for the male, because he had walked away from the hospital. Deputies responded but were unable to locate the male at that time.

Later that day, at approximately 11:55 PM, deputies from the San Diego Sheriff's Department North County Coastal Patrol Station responded to a call of a suspicious person in the 800 block of Birmingham Drive in Cardiff, CA. The reporting party stated that a Black male (originally described as in his 30's) was crawling around the parking lot with no shirt and no shoes. When deputies arrived, they located the subject of the radio call, evaluated him, and placed him under arrest for being under the influence of a controlled substance. The male was taken into custody without incident and determined to be the same male from the prior two radio calls.

The male was transported to the Vista Detention Facility. Prior to being booked into jail, the male began throwing himself against the interior of the patrol car, causing injury to his face. The male also moved his handcuffs to the front of his body. Deputies requested paramedics for the male's injury at approximately 12:49 AM, then had the male exit the car, fix his handcuffs, and sit down on a bench. Shortly after that, the male stood up and then began kicking and flailing against deputies trying to control him. A California Highway Patrol Officer booking an unrelated prisoner ran over to assist momentarily before being relieved by deputies. Deputies requested additional assistance and then

applied a WRAP restraint device to the male. He was detained and medics were cleared in at 12:57 AM. Deputies monitored the male until paramedics arrived. After paramedics arrived, the male experienced a medical emergency and went unconscious and stopped breathing. Paramedics began life saving measures and transported the male to a local hospital where he was pronounced deceased at approximately 4:00 AM.

The victim is now identified as Abdul Kamara. He is described as a 29-year-old African-American male. His cause of death is still under investigation by the San Diego County Medical Examiner.

The deputies who initially arrested Kamara are Deputy Alejandro Aguilera and Deputy Tyler Phillips. Both are assigned to North County Coastal Patrol. Aguilera has been employed for approximately 8 years. Phillips has been employed for approximately 2.5 years.

The deputies who assisted at the Vista Detention Facility are Corporal Christopher Aberle, assigned to the Vista Detention Facility and employed for approximately 4 years, Deputy Carlos Heard, assigned to Vista Patrol and employed for approximately 5.5 years, Deputy Travis Kaapke, assigned to Vista Patrol and employed for approximately 4.5 years, and Deputy Derrick Jones, assigned to Juvenile Court Services and employed for approximately 12.5 years.

Per the Countywide Memorandum of Understanding, the San Diego Police Homicide Unit was called to the scene to conduct the in-custody death investigation. Detectives responded to Vista to gather evidence, interview witnesses, and examine the circumstances that led up to the medical emergency.

The investigation and review process for in-custody deaths are extremely thorough. When the Homicide Unit completes its investigation, it will be reviewed by the San Diego County District Attorney's Office to determine if the officers bear any criminal liability for their actions. The San Diego Sheriff's Department will conduct an administrative investigation into the deputy's actions. The Citizens' Law Enforcement Review Board (CLERB) will conduct a review of the incident and provide any appropriate recommendations. The Federal Bureau of Investigations and the United States Attorney's Office will also be monitoring the investigation.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is encouraged to call the Homicide Unit at (619) 531-2293 or Crime Stoppers at (888) 580-8477.