Subject: Death In The Hamilton County Corrections System

Standard: 5120: 1-8-0-3 (B) (4)

Effective Date: 10/01/1985
Date Revised: 10/29/2015
01/26/2018

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to set up guidelines to be followed in the event of an inmate death in the Hamilton County Corrections System.

POLICY: If a death occurs within the Hamilton County Corrections System, whether accidental or deliberate, staff shall act to preserve the scene, notify the proper authorities, thoroughly investigate the incident, notify next of kin, and complete reporting requirements.

DEFINITION:

Jail Emergency - A jail emergency can be, but not limited to, escape, hostage situation, fire, riot, food poisoning, civil disturbance in the community, natural disaster, suicide, other death, outbreak or contagious disease, inmate strike and other disturbances, bomb threat, or any action that affects or jeopardizes the security of the Hamilton County Corrections System and/or the safety of the inmate and/or staff.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES:

I. When it is determined that a death has occurred, the following steps shall be taken.

A. The discovering staff person shall:

1. Notify the medical staff and the on-duty supervisor.

2. Immediately secure all inmates in their cell(s).

3. When incident occurs in a double cell unit, the inmate’s cell-mate will be placed in another open cell or secured in the sallyport.

4. Do not move the body.

B. The shift supervisor shall:

1. Order a lock down of the effected unit.

Sheriff's Approval: Jim Neil
Date: 01-26-2014
2. Have all visitors report to the 1st floor.

3. Notify the Jail Investigator Unit.

4. Order Central Control not to allow anyone to leave the facility, including staff.

5. Notify the Administrative Captain or designee.

6. Any and all items the inmate may have been in possession of (i.e. cards, letters, notes, etc.) should be kept secure at the scene for the investigators.

C. Once on scene, the Jail Investigation Unit shall be in control of the scene.

1. The on-duty supervisor shall brief the Jail Investigation Unit of any information he/she has ascertained.

2. Document all persons entering and exiting the scene.

3. Notify the Sheriff's Enforcement Criminal Investigation Section (CIS).

4. Document all possible witnesses and staff. Keep witnesses separated from each other to avoid collaboration of statements.

5. Ensure the integrity of the scene.

6. Compile or have complied, all available information on the deceased.

7. Upon arrival of CIS, The Jail Investigative Unit will provide assistance and support to the members of CIS.

NOTE- See Policy and Procedure- Jail Investigation Team- C.26.

D. The Administrative Captain and/or Operations Commander or designee shall:

1. Respond to the location the death has occurred.

2. Notify the Ohio Department of Corrections.

3. Notify the Department of Justice.

4. Notify the Inmate Chaplain Service for notification of next of kin.
5. Notify Internal Affairs.

E. Once the immediate investigation of the death has been completed, the on-duty supervisor shall:

1. Allow visitors and staff held for questioning to leave.
2. Return the effected unit to normal operation.
3. Direct all media request to the Public Information Officer.

F. The on-duty Lieutenant shall submit a written report to the Division Major or designee, Chief Deputy, and the Sheriff within twenty-four (24) hours that shall include:

1. The inmate’s name, age, address, identification number, and control number.
2. The reason the inmate was incarcerated.
3. The cause of death, if known.
4. The approximate time of death.
5. The last time the inmate was seen by a staff member.
6. The time of death was reported to the Coroner’s Office or physician in attendance.

G. Once CIS or IA has completed their investigation, they will notify the Hamilton County Coroner’s Office.

H. In all inmate deaths, the health authority determines the appropriateness of clinical care; ascertains whether corrective action in the system’s policies, procedures, or practices is warranted; and, identifies trends that require further study.

II. Evaluation

A. A complete evaluation of the death, including circumstances that led up to and action taken by Jail Service deputies, will be conducted by the Division Major.
B. The Division Major will present all findings to the evaluation in writing to the Jail Staff, Chief Deputy and the Sheriff.