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Enforcement and Removal

05/15/2017

ICE detainee passes away at Georgia hospital

ATLANTA – A Panamanian national in the custody of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement at the Stewart Detention Facility in Lumpkin, Georgia, died early Monday at an area hospital after he was found unresponsive in his cell and efforts by facility staff and emergency personnel to revive him were unsuccessful.

Jean Jimenez-Joseph, 27, was pronounced dead at Phoebe Sumter Medical Center in Americus, Georgia, at 2:15 a.m. The preliminary cause of death was ruled to be self-inflicted strangulation. Stewart facility staff conducting scheduled monitoring discovered Mr. Jimenez unresponsive in his cell with a sheet around his neck at approximately 12:45 a.m. Facility staff and medical personnel immediately began to perform CPR and contacted Stewart County Emergency Medical Services, which arrived at the facility at 12:57 a.m.

Consistent with the agency’s protocols, the appropriate state health and local law enforcement agencies have been notified about the death, as have the Department of Homeland Security’s Office of Inspector General and the ICE Office of Professional Responsibility. Additionally, ICE has advised Panamanian consular representatives who have notified Mr. Jimenez’s next of kin.

ICE is firmly committed to the health and welfare of all those in its custody and is undertaking a comprehensive agency-wide review of this incident, as it does in all such cases. Fatalities in ICE custody, statistically, are exceedingly rare and occur at a fraction of the rate of the U.S. detained population as a whole. This agency’s comprehensive review will be conducted by ICE senior leadership to include Enforcement and Removal Operations, the Office of Professional Responsibility and the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor.

Mr. Jimenez entered ICE custody March 2 in Wake County, North Carolina, pursuant to an ICE immigration detainer following his release from local law enforcement custody after his Jan. 5 felony conviction for larceny of a motor vehicle. At this time of his death, Mr. Jimenez was in immigration removal proceedings.

Mr. Jimenez is the seventh individual to pass away in ICE custody in fiscal year 2017. He is the first fatality of a detainee from the Stewart Detention Center in more than eight years.

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