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Enforcement and Removal
10/16/2019

ICE detainee passes away in Louisiana

NEW ORLEANS – A Cuban man in the custody of U.S. Immigration and Enforcement (ICE) at the Richwood Correctional Center in Richwood, Louisiana, passed away Tuesday afternoon at the facility.

Roylan Hernandez-Diaz, 43, was pronounced dead at 2:21 p.m. local time by facility medical personnel after he was found unresponsive in his cell and efforts by facility staff and emergency personnel to revive him were unsuccessful. The preliminary cause of death appears to be self-inflicted strangulation; however, the case is currently under investigation.

Consistent with the agency’s protocols, the appropriate agencies have been notified about the death, including the Department of Homeland Security’s Office of Inspector General, and the ICE Office of Professional Responsibility.

Additionally, ICE has notified Mr. Hernandez-Diaz’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. Hernandez-Diaz entered ICE custody May 20, 2019, two days after he was encountered by the U.S. Border Patrol at the Paso Del Norte Port of Entry in El Paso, Texas, and deemed inadmissible under the Immigration and Nationality Act.

He was subsequently transferred into ICE custody pending adjudication of his claim for an immigration benefit. At the time of his death, Mr. Hernandez-Diaz’s case was still pending before the federal immigration courts.

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