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Marshallese man in ICE custody passes away at Louisiana hospital

NEW ORLEANS – A 56-year-old Marshallese man in the custody of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) following his conviction for sexual assault of a five-year-old child in Washington County, Arkansas, passed away Saturday at the Christus St. Frances Cabrini Hospital in Alexandria, Louisiana. The preliminary cause of death was reported by hospital medical officials to be complications of coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

Romien Jally was pronounced dead at 8:19 a.m. (CDT) by medical professionals at Christus St. Frances Cabrini Hospital. Jally was initially admitted to the Winn Parish Medical Center in Winnfield, Louisiana, on August 25, 2020, with a diagnosis of COVID-19. He was subsequently transferred to Christus St. Frances Cabrini Hospital on August 28 for higher-level care following an additional diagnosis of bacterial pneumonia.

Jally initially entered the U.S. lawfully on October 24, 2003, in Honolulu, Hawaii, under the Compact of Free Association as a nonimmigrant. Jally was taken into ICE custody on May 1, 2020, at the Washington County Jail in Fayetteville, Arkansas, following his conviction that same day of second-degree sexual assault for exposing himself and inappropriately touching a five-year-old child. After registering as a sex offender, Jally was transferred to the Winn Correctional Center after being served a Notice of Intent to Issue a Final Administrative Removal Order pursuant to his conviction for an aggravated felony, which made him subject to removal under federal law.

At the time of his death, Jally was pending removal to the Marshall Islands in accordance with a final administrative removal order issued August 4, 2020.

Consistent with the agency's protocols, the appropriate agencies have been notified about the death, including the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG), and the ICE Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR). Additionally, ICE has notified the Marshallese Consulate of Jally's death; Marshallese consular officials have notified his 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 national average for the U.S. detained population.

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The agency's review will be conducted by ICE senior leadership, including Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) and the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA).

ICE's Health Service Corps (IHSC) ensures the provision of necessary medical care services as required by ICE Performance-Based National Detention Standards and based on the medical needs of the detainee. Comprehensive medical care is provided from the moment detainees arrive and throughout the entirety of their stay. All ICE detainees receive medical, dental and mental health intake screening within 12 hours of arriving at each detention facility, a full health assessment within 14 days of entering ICE custody or arrival at a facility, and access to daily sick call and 24-hour emergency care. Pursuant to our commitment to the welfare of those in the agency's custody, ICE annually spends more than \$269 million on the spectrum of healthcare services provided to detainees.

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