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ICE NEWSROOM

OCTOBER 4, 2021 • NEW ORLEANS, LA • DETAINEE DEATH NOTIFICATIONS

Venezuelan man in ICE custody passes away in Mississippi hospital

NEW ORLEANS – A Venezuelan man in the custody of U.S. Immigration and Enforcement (ICE) passed away Oct. 1 at Merit Health River Oaks (MHRO), Flowood, Mississippi. The preliminary cause of death was from complications with acute respiratory failure, acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), pneumonia, acute kidney failure, anemia, and COVID-19.

Pablo Sanchez-Gotopo, 40, was pronounced dead at 5:02 p.m. (CST) by MHRO medical staff. Sanchez had been in the hospital receiving ongoing treatment for his health conditions.

U.S. Border Patrol apprehended Sanchez on May 17, 2021, near Del Rio, Texas. He was transferred into ICE custody at Adams County Detention Center (ACDC), Natchez, Mississippi, on May 21, 2021. Upon arrival to an ICE facility, all detainees are medically screened and administered a COVID-19 test by ICE Health Service Corps (IHSC) personnel. Sanchez's test results came back negative. On July 28, 2021, on-site medical staff tested him again, with negative test results, after Sanchez began showing symptoms of COVID-19. On the same day, ACDC staff referred Sanchez to Merit Health Natchez (MHN), Mississippi for additional advanced medical care.

After Sanchez's health condition deteriorated, ERO New Orleans staff coordinated with hospital staff to arrange family visitation. On Sept. 25, 2021, MHN medical staff transferred Sanchez to MHRO for further medical evaluation.

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

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.

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 \$315 million on the spectrum of healthcare services provided to detainees.

Updated: 10/05/2021

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