



ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

SHERIFF-CORONER DON BARNES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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In-custody death

SANTA ANA, Ca. (July 15, 2019) – A 44-year-old inmate was pronounced dead this morning after being transported to the hospital. Deputies were called to assist the inmate in his cell at the Theo Lacy Facility at approximately 8:20 a.m. Deputies responded and located the inmate unresponsive with no obvious signs of trauma on his body. Deputies rendered medical aid and called for additional medical assistance. The inmate was transported to the hospital where he was pronounced deceased approximately an hour later.

The cause of death is pending investigation by the Coroner's division. An autopsy will be conducted and a cause of death determined after toxicology results are received, which typically take six to eight weeks.

The inmate had booked himself into the Orange County Jail on July 10, 2019, by court order for 2017 drug-related charges. He will not be identified at this time pending notification to next of kin.

As a practice, the Orange County Sheriff's Department will be issuing a press release following unexpected in-custody deaths. The Department will not issue press releases for inmates who die expectedly from a terminal illness while in custody.

"The decision to release this information is for increased public transparency, and should not be misconstrued," said Orange County Sheriff-Coroner Don Barnes. "We take seriously the charge to provide for the inmates in our custody. Inmate deaths are not common, but in an institution that houses more than 5,000 people on a 24/7 basis, they can occur. A full investigation is completed to determine if there are any opportunities for increasing the safety and security of our jails."

This case will be investigated by the Orange County District Attorney's office and an in-custody death review will be completed by the Orange County Sheriff's Department.

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