



**Illinois
Department of
Corrections**

Pat Quinn
Governor

S. A. Godinez
Director

1301 Concordia Court • P.O. Box 19277
Springfield IL 62794-9277

Telephone: (217) 558-2200
TDD: (800) 526-0844

March 12, 2014

Kirk Allen
Kirk@edgarcountywatchdogs.com

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request #140311085

Dear Mr. Allen:

This letter is in response to your request to the Illinois Department of Corrections for information pursuant to the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140/1, et seq.

You have requested:

1. Copy of all investigative reports and related documents pertaining to the work performed by DOC and/or the ISP at the Coles County Sheriff's office after the death of David J. Bower on or about February 28th, 2013 from an apparent suicide while in the custody of the Coles County Jail. This would include any inspections, investigations, findings etc. related to this incident.

Responsive records are enclosed, but have been redacted for the following reasons:

Medical treatment references and information from the decedent's medical file, dates of birth, signatures, and race have been redacted pursuant to Section 7(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Act which exempts the release of "Private information, unless disclosure is required by another provision of this Act, a State or federal law or a court order."

Personal information has been redacted pursuant to Section 7(1)(c) of the Freedom of Information Act which exempts the release of "Personal information contained within public records, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, unless the disclosure is consented to in writing by the individual subjects of the information. "Unwarranted invasion of personal privacy" means the disclosure of information that is highly personal or objectionable to a reasonable person and in which the subject's right to privacy outweighs any legitimate public interest in obtaining the information." The redacted information consists of details surrounding deaths by suicide which are highly personal to surviving family and friends of the deceased.


In the event you view this as a denial of your request, you have a right to have the denial reviewed by the Public Access Counselor (PAC) at the Office of the Illinois Attorney General, pursuant to 5 ILCS 140/9.5(a). You can file your request for review with the PAC to:

Public Access Counselor
Office of the Attorney General
500 South 2nd Street
Springfield, Illinois 62706

You also have the right to seek judicial review of your denial by filing a lawsuit in the state circuit court, pursuant to 5 ILCS 140/11.

If you choose to file a request for review with the PAC, you must do so within 60 calendar days of the date of this denial letter (5 ILCS 140/9.5(a)). Please note that you must include a copy of your original FOIA request and this denial letter when filing a request for review with the PAC.

Sincerely,


Lisa Weitekamp
Freedom of Information Officer

Enclosures

Illinois Department of Corrections
Office of Jail and Detention Standards
INVESTIGATION REPORT

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|----------------|
| Case Number 2013- 2 - 28 | Report Date 3/15/13 | Facility: Coles County Jail | Case Investigator D. Fritschle | | | |
| Time 11:00 AM Date 2/28/13 | | | | | | |
| Nature of Incident Detainee Death In Custody: Hanging | | | | | | |
| SUBJECT | Name: (Last, First, Middle) Bower, James D. | | Complainant <input type="checkbox"/> | Victim <input type="checkbox"/> | Inmate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | | Offender <input type="checkbox"/> | Witness <input type="checkbox"/> | Employee <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | CIMIS Number 58945020 | | Arrest Date/Charge 02/23/2013: Retail theft > \$150.00 | | | |
| | DOB: [REDACTED] | SEX: M | RACE: [REDACTED] | Eyes: Grn | Hair: Brn | HT: 508 |
| REPORT STATUS: Initial Open <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Final <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | |

Interviewed: Lieutenant Lisa Tillis, Jail Administrator

Case Summary: According to interview and jail documentation, Detainee Bower was found in his cell hanging with a sheet around his neck. Officer Hammond was serving lunch trays at approximately 11am and noticed Detainee Bower's feet flat on the floor in his cell with a sheet hanging over the bars blocking the officer's view. The officer assumed the detainee was using the toilet in his cell and wanted privacy. The officer continued to pass out meals then detainees in C block were trying to get the officer's attention. Detainees had found Bower hanging in his cell with a sheet around his neck. Officer Hammond called for backup and they cut Bower down and [REDACTED] EMS arrived at approximately 11:08am and took over rescue measures. The coroner was called in and pronounced Bower dead at approximately 11:21am. Illinois State Police were notified and completed and investigation.

Conclusion: It appears that jail staff reacted appropriately to the incident. Detainee Bower was able to hang himself with a sheet around his neck. He was being housed in a cell by himself. It is common practice in the jail that a detainee may hang a sheet over his cell bars for privacy when he is having a bowel movement.

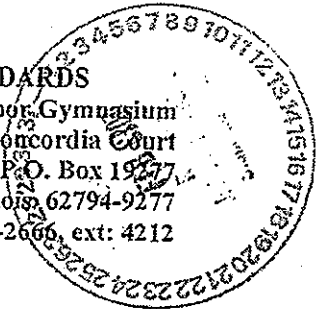
Recommendations: The Jail and Detention Staff concurs with Lt. Tillis: Detainee housing policy will be reviewed. Policy change may be that a detainee will always be housed with another detainee instead of by himself/herself. Obstructions over the cell bars will no longer be tolerated.

Attachments: None.

STATE OF ILLINOIS
 DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
 BUREAU OF OPERATIONS

OFFICE OF JAIL & DETENTION STANDARDS

Second Floor Gymnasium
 1301 Concordia Court
 P.O. Box 19277
 Springfield, Illinois 62794-9277
 217/522-2666, ext: 4212



REPORT OF EXTRAORDINARY OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE

County X Municipal _____

AUTHORITY: Illinois Compiled Statutes, 730 ILCS 5/3-15-2

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Reports must be made on all extraordinary or unusual occurrences involving detainees.
2. Mail reports within 72 hours of occurrence to the Office of Jail and Detention Standards. Whenever delay is unavoidable, make report by telephone and follow as soon as possible with written report.
3. Forward the original of this report and retain a copy.

1. Name of facility: Charles County Sheriff's Office
 Address: 701 7th Street Charleston IL 61920

2. Date of occurrence: 02-25-2013 3. Time of occurrence: 11:00 AM

4. Type of occurrence:
 Suicide X Suicide Attempt _____ Homicide _____ Homicide Attempt _____
 Escape _____ Fire _____ Serious Injury _____ Battery _____
 Riot or Rebellion _____ Sex Offense _____ Other _____

5. Detainees involved:

| Name | Age | Date Confirmed | Charge |
|--|-----|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| David Julius Bowler | 25 | 02-23-2013 | retail theft > \$150.00 |
| Christopher McElrath | 19 | 01-09-2013 | escape |
| Martin Oliver | 21 | 02-27-2013 | dom bat/ crim tres residence |
| 6. If death resulting David Julius Bowler | 25 | 02-15-2013 | dom bat/ pos firearm viol. justice |

Name of deceased: David Julius Bowler
 Cause of death: hanging Date & Time of Death: 02-25-13 @ 11:21

Prior to death, last seen by: 02-25-13 @ 07:30 by Cpl. Alex Hesse

Reported by: Cpl. Cody Hammond

Was deceased examined by a physician? NO When? _____

Did deceased give signs of illness? NO

7. Detainees interviewed:

| Name | Age | Reason Admitted |
|---------------------|-----|------------------------------------|
| Christopher Michael | 19 | 1st time |
| Twan Tringer | 25 | obst. gov / dom but / poss firearm |
| Marvin Oliver | 21 | dom but / own tree's residence |

housed with David Bowler

8. Official interviewed:

| Name | Title |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Off. Gary Hammond | Correctional Officer |
| Off. Alex Hesse | Correctional Officer |
| Off. Jeremy Jones | Correctional Officers |

9. Principal cause of occurrence:

for unknown reasons inmate Bowler chose to end his life.

10. Summary of details of occurrence:

[REDACTED]

at his dormitory. Inmate Bowler tied to the bars with a commissary receipt. He covered the doorway with his blanket & hung himself from the shut, behind the blanket. Body was discovered at 11:00 by inmate Marvin Oliver when trays were being served. [REDACTED]

Inmates were removed from the area. Bowler's body was placed on the floor. [REDACTED]

11. Recommendations to prevent such occurrence: - content on reverse.

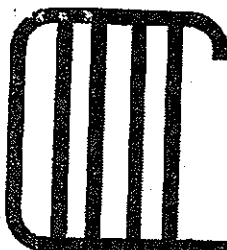
This occurred in an 8-man living area that was housing 4 inmates. Each inmate was occupying a two man cell. It may be wise to require inmates to be housed together. An individual considering suicide is less likely to make an attempt in the presence of another person. It is a violation of our policy for inmates to move the bars to their cell with anything for any reason. The inmates will place a blanket over the door of their cell when having a bowel movement & remove it when they are (cont'd)

Report Date: 02.28.2013

Reporting Officer's Signature [REDACTED]

-Contel - Summary of details
Nurse was summoned & asked to bring resuscitation equipment &
EMS were notified. Nurse Wixby Chambers arrived & applied pads for
the Phillips Heartstart AED unit. It did not recommend
[REDACTED] continued until EMS arrived

-Contel - Recommendations
finished. Officers must ensure that inmates are not allowed to
continue this practice & anything obstructing our view must
be corrected upon discovery.



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Telephone: (217) 558-2200
TDD: (800) 526-0844

April 16, 2013

Sheriff Darrell Cox
701 7th Street
PO Box 347
Charleston, Illinois 61920

Dear Sheriff Cox:

Dianne Fritschle from the Jail and Detention Standards Unit recently investigated an unusual occurrence reported by your staff. On February 28, 2013, detainee David J. Bower was found dead in his cell at the Coles County Jail.

According to staff interviews and jail documentation, it appears that your staff responded appropriately to the incident. The Jail and Detention Standards Unit staff concurs with Lieutenant Tillis that jail policy will be reviewed to see if changes could be made that may reduce the risk of this kind of occurrence.

There were no violations found concerning this incident as it relates the *Illinois County Jail Standards*. Members of the Jail and Detention Standards Unit are available for consultation should you so desire. We may be reached at 217-558-2200, ext 4212.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Mike Funk.

Mike Funk, Manager
Jail and Detention Standards Unit

Cc: file