



Colorado Bureau of Investigation
Case Master Report 2024-0687

Date Initiated 11/07/2024

Primary Information

AGENCY: COLORADO BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
DIVISION: INVESTIGATIONS
OFFICE: PUEBLO
Lead LEO: Somosky, Joe SA3 (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
Type Of Case: Death Investigation
Case Sub Type: In Custody Death
Case Description: Huerfano County Sheriff's Office Request for Assistance - Inmate Hanging death
Total Time: 15:30

Tips

<u>Number</u>	<u>Entry Date</u>	<u>Occurred Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Description</u>
T2024-4282	11/07/2024 11:21	11/07/2024 10:00	CLOSED	Huerfano County Sheriff's Office Request for Assistance - Inmate Hanging death

Case Status

Case Status: CLOSED ASSISTANCE GIVEN
Case Status Date: 05/01/2025
Disposition Code: CLOSED ASSIST GIVEN
Disposition Date: 05/01/2025
Dissemination: System Wide



Colorado Bureau of Investigation

INITIAL 2024-0687

Report Date: 11/07/2024

Primary Information

Description: **Huerfano County Sheriff's Office Request for Assistance - Inmate Hanging death**
Occurrence From: **11/07/2024 11:45**
Occurrence To: **11/07/2024 12:45**
Source Of Info: **HCSO Sheriff Bruce Newman**
Reporting LEO: **Somosky, Joe AGT (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)**
Backup LEO: **Sczech, Heather AGT (CRIME SCENE UNIT / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)**
Report Status: **Approved**
Report Status Date: **12/03/2024**
Approved By: **Adams, Chris SA5 (CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)**

Synopsis

Huerfano County Sheriff's Office Request for Assistance - Inmate Hanging death

Address #1 - OCCURRED #1 - 500 S ALBERT AVE

Primary Information

Address: **500 S ALBERT AVE HUERFANO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, WALSENBURG, COLORADO 81089 UNITED STATES**
Description: **HUERFANO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**
Judicial District: **3rd Judicial District**

Subject #1 - SUBJECT #1 - DeHerrera, Thomas

Primary Information

Subject Name: **DeHerrera, Thomas**
Record Type: **PERSON**
Bio: **[REDACTED]**
Birth Date: **[REDACTED]**
Juvenile: **NO**

Addresses

<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Address</u>
HOME ADDRESS	[REDACTED]

Officers

LEO

[REDACTED]

Narrative begins on the following page.

SYNOPSIS:

Huerfano County Sheriff's Office Request for Assistance - Inmate Hanging death

ACTION TAKEN:

On November 7th, 2024 at 1145 hours I, Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Agent J F Somosky assigned to the CBI Pueblo Regional Field Office responded to an emergency call-out request for the Huerfano County Sheriff's Office (HCSO). HCSO Sheriff Bruce Newman requested CBI investigative and crime scene assistance for an in-custody death (jail inmate hanging). The death was reported to have occurred within the HCSO jail located at 500 South Albert Avenue in Walsenburg, Colorado earlier in the day on November 7th. The deceased inmate was identified as Mr. Thomas DeHerrera DOB [REDACTED]

As the on-call CBI Pueblo Major Crimes Agent I responded to the HCSO to assist along with CBI Crime Scene Agent Heather Szech. Please refer to investigative and crime scene supplemental ACISS reports for complete details.

BODY-WORN CAMERA:

Body-worn camera (BWC) footage for this report DOES NOT EXIST.

ATTACHMENTS:

None for this report



Colorado Bureau of Investigation
CRIME SCENE SUPPLEMENT 2024-0687/1

Report Date: 11/07/2024

Primary Information

Description:	Crime scene processing of in-custody death at Huerfano Co. Jail
Occurrence From:	11/07/2024 14:05
Occurrence To:	11/07/2024 16:50
Reporting LEO:	Sczech, Heather AGT (CRIME SCENE UNIT / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
Report Status:	Approved
Report Status Date:	11/14/2024
Approved By:	Bryant, Erick AIC (COLORADO BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION)

Response Information

Weather Upon Arrival:	N/A
Work Status:	N/A
Call Received By:	N/A
Investigator:	Somosky, Joe SA3 (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
Investigator Status:	N/A

Agency Reference Numbers

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Case/File Number</u>
Huerfano County Sheriff's Office	240673

Subject #1 - SUBJECT #1 - Deherrera, Thomas Joseph

Primary Information

Subject Name:	Deherrera, Thomas Joseph
Record Type:	PERSON
Bio:	[REDACTED]
Birth Date:	[REDACTED]
Juvenile:	NO

Subject #2 - CORONER #1 - VONNIE MAIER-VALDEZ

Primary Information

Subject Name:	VONNIE MAIER-VALDEZ
Record Type:	CORONER

Business Description

Business Type:	GOVERNMENT/PUBLIC BLDG
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Addresses

Relationship	Address
BUSINESS LOCATION	326 MAIN ST CORONER'S OFFICE, WALSENBURG, COLORADO 81089 UNITED STATES



Colorado Bureau of Investigation
CRIME SCENE SUPPLEMENT 2024-0687/1

Report Date: 11/07/2024

Subject #3 - LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #1 - RAPO, MILAN

Primary Information

Subject Name: **RAPO, MILAN**
Record Type: **LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL**
Bio: **WHITE, MALE**
Rank: **CAPTAIN**
Juvenile: **NO**

Narrative begins on the following page.

SYNOPSIS:

Crime scene processing at the Huerfano County jail following an in-custody death.

NOTIFICATION:

On Thursday, November 7, 2024, at approximately 1120 hours, I, Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Crime Scene Analyst (CSA), Heather Sczech, was notified of an in-custody death at the Huerfano County Jail. Crime scene and investigative assistance was requested.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On Wednesday, November 6, 2024, Huerfano County inmate Thomas Joseph Deherrera attempted to hang himself while located in the general population of the Huerfano County Jail. He was transported by ambulance to the hospital and later returned to the jail. Deherrera was placed in a holding cell and placed on suicide watch. Deherrera was checked at approximately 0958 hours on Thursday, November 7, 2024, and found to be fine at this time. The next check occurred at 1025 hours and Deherrera was found hanging from the cell door hinge from a piece of green fabric consistent with the suicide smock he had been wearing. Huerfano County Jail Deputies cut Deherrera down and moved him from the cell into the booking area outside of the holding cells to attempt life saving efforts. The ambulance arrived shortly after Deherrera was discovered and life saving efforts were continued by medical personnel. Deherrera did not respond to the life saving efforts and his time death was 1104 hours.

ARRIVAL TIME:

I arrived at the Huerfano County Sheriff's Office (HCSO)/Jail at approximately 1405 hours on Thursday, November 7, 2024, and met with HCSO Undersheriff Milan Rapo, CBI Agent Somosky, and members of the Huerfano County Coroner's Office.

INITIAL BRIEFING:

Undersheriff Rapo stated Deherrera at been in the jail since September, 17, 2024, on a burglary charge. Deherrera had no disciplinary nor other issues during his stay at the jail. It was reported Deherrera had received upsetting news from one of his children before the incident that occurred on November 6. Deherrera used a ripped towel during the attempted suicide on November 6. When the deputies found Deherrera on November 7, 2024, he had used the upper hinge of the cell door to affix the ligature. The ligature was twisted around his neck and the deputies had to physically turn Deherrera in an attempt to loosen the ligature until a knife was obtained to cut the fabric ligature.

SCENE OBSERVATIONS:

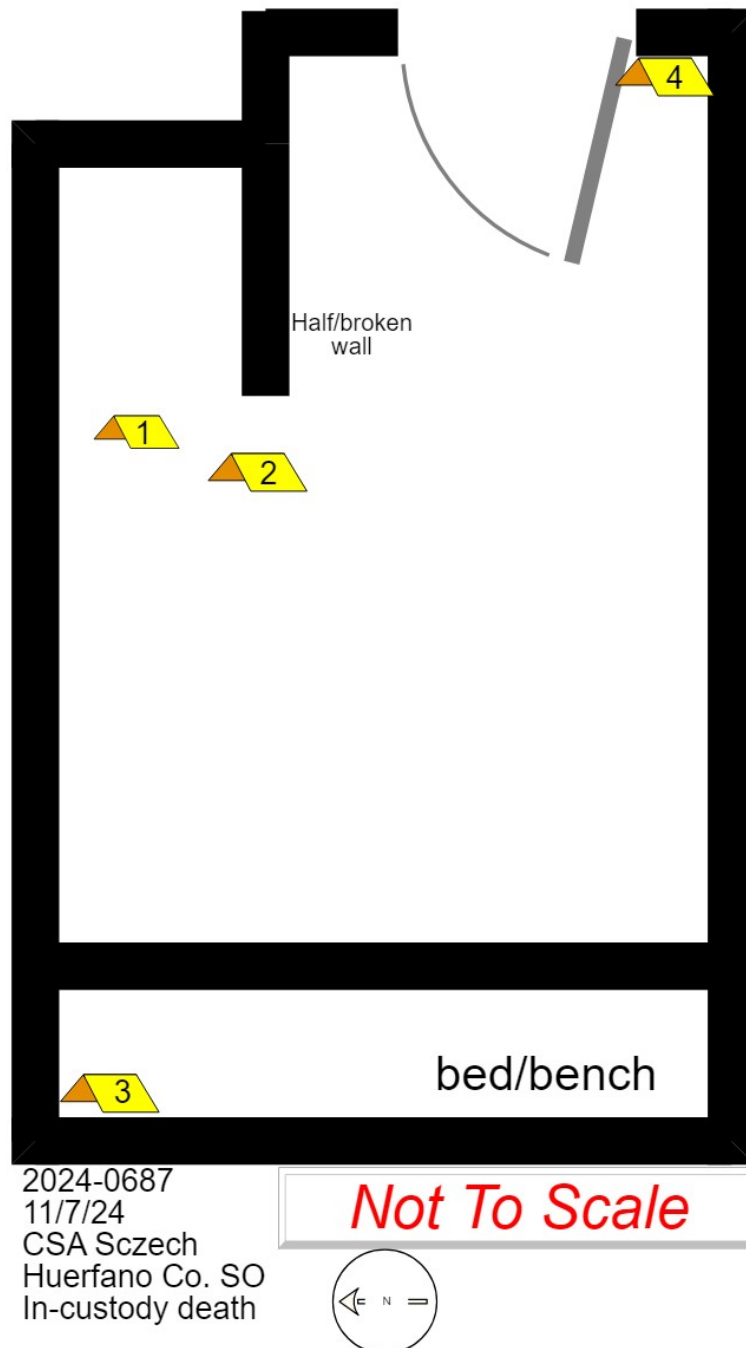
The area of the jail Deherrera was located in consisted of 3 holding cells along the west wall that all opened into a booking area with a desk. Deherrera was covered with a blanket and located in the booking area. The cell he was located in at the time of the incident was the middle cell, H-101.

Upon entering cell H-101 the half wall that was intended to provide privacy for the toilet was partially broken with exposed, jagged cinder blocks. This partial wall was four feet tall where it met the east wall and one foot, eleven inches where the partial wall terminated. Near the termination of the partial wall a

green strip of fabric/ligature (HLS-1) and a green smock (HLS-2) were located. A green blanket (HLS-3) was folded on the bench/bed and located in the northwest corner of the cell. Upon unfolding the blanket, it was discovered that the blanket was ripped in multiple areas and multiple strips of fabric of varying sizes were located folded in the blanket. The smock was found to be undamaged. The blanket (HLS-3) and the smock (HLS-2) were the same shade of green. In between the north wall of the cell and the damaged partial wall there were green threads on the floor and a piece of cotton that was consistent with the filling in the blanket. It appeared that the jagged edges of the cinder block could have been used to rip the blanket. The door to the cell opened inward with the hinges in the southeast corner. A piece of green fabric (HLS-4) was looped around the upper hinge with the bottom tightly twisted. The hinge was four inches long with the top of the upper hinge at approximately five feet, eleven inches from the ground.

Deherrera was located in the booking area outside of the cell. Multiple pieces of medical intervention were strewn about the floor of the booking area. Deherrera was laying on his back and did not have on any clothing. There was a tube in his mouth and several medical leads attached to his chest and his hips. There were also tubes connected to his left lower leg. Several pieces of green thread were adhering to the bottom of his left heel. A ligature mark was present on his neck with a slightly upward path towards the back of his head. The ligature mark did not extend around the back of the neck/head.

DIAGRAM:



DOCUMENTATION:

The scene was documented using digital photography and a diagram of the cell was prepared.

EVIDENCE TRANSFER:

All items were packaged properly and sealed prior to transfer. Items HLS-2 and HLS-3 were transferred to Undersheriff Milan Rapo at 1635 hours. Items HLS-1 and HLS-4 were transferred to CBI Agent Somosky at 1640 hours. Agent Somosky took custody of items that would be transported to the autopsy that was scheduled for 0900 hours on Friday, November 8, 2024.

CLEARANCE TIME:

I cleared from the Huerfano County Sheriff's Office at approximately 1650 hours.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1-1 HLS 2024-0687 Scene Photos
- 1-2 HLS 2024-0687 Scene Photo Array
- 1-3 HLS 2024-0687 Scene Notes
- 1-4 HLS 2024-0687 Evidence Transfer Form CBI
- 1-5 HLS 2024-0687 Evidence Transfer Form Huerfano Co SO
- 1-6 HLS 2024-0687 Scene Diagram



Colorado Bureau of Investigation
CRIME SCENE SUPPLEMENT 2024-0687/2

Report Date: 11/08/2024

Primary Information

Description:	Autopsy of Thomas Deherrera
Reporting LEO:	Sczech, Heather AGT (CRIME SCENE UNIT / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
Report Status:	Approved
Report Status Date:	11/14/2024
Approved By:	Bryant, Erick AIC (COLORADO BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION)

Response Information

Weather Upon Arrival:	N/A
Work Status:	N/A
Call Received By:	N/A
Investigator:	Somosky, Joe SA3 (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
Investigator Status:	N/A

Agency Reference Numbers

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Case/File Number</u>
EL PASO COUNTY CORONER'S OFFICE	24-01042

Subject #1 - SUBJECT #1 - Deherrera, Thomas Joseph

Primary Information

Subject Name:	Deherrera, Thomas Joseph
Record Type:	PERSON
Bio:	[REDACTED]
Birth Date:	[REDACTED]
Juvenile:	NO

Subject #2 - MEDICAL EXAMINER #1 - KELLY, LEON

Primary Information

Subject Name:	KELLY, LEON
Record Type:	LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL
Bio:	WHITE, MALE
Rank:	CHIEF DEPUTY MEDICAL EXAMINER
Juvenile:	NO

Telephones / E-Addresses

<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Number/E-Address</u>
EMPLOYER	(719) 390-2450 (BUSINESS)

Narrative begins on the following page.

SYNOPSIS:

Autopsy of Thomas Joseph Herrera following his death at occurred at the Huerfano County Jail.

NOTIFICATION:

During scene processing on November 7, 2024, Huerfano County Coroner, Vonnie Maier-Valdez, informed myself, Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Crime Scene Analyst (CSA) Heather Sczech, that the autopsy was scheduled for 0900 hours on Friday, November 8, at the El Paso County Coroner's Office (EPCCO).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On Thursday, November 7, 2024, Thomas Joseph Deherrera, an inmate at the Huerfano County Jail, was found hanging in his cell. Deherrera had also attempted to hang himself on Wednesday, November 6, 2024. Deherrera was cut down by fellow inmates and taken to the hospital. Deherrera had a slight head injury as a result of being cut down. Deherrera did not incur any other injuries and was released from the hospital back to the care of Huerfano County. Huerfano County jail deputies placed Deherrera in a solitary holding cell on suicide watch. Deherrera was found hanging in the holding cell during a routine check at approximately 1025 hours on Thursday, November 7, 2024.

ARRIVAL TIME:

I arrived at the El Paso County Coroner's Office at approximately 0840 hours on Friday, November 8, 2024.

AUTOPSY OBSERVATIONS:**DOCUMENTATION:**

The autopsy was documented with digital photography.

EVIDENCE TRANSFER:

All evidence collected during the autopsy was packaged by the EPCCO staff and transferred to Agent Somosky. Agent Somosky retained items HLS-1 and HLS-4. After Dr. Kelly had completed his examination of the items I placed them back into their original packaging and resealed the items for Agent Somosky.

CLEARANCE TIME:

CBI personnel cleared from the EPCCO at approximately 1015 hours.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 2-1 HLS 2024-0687 Autopsy Photos
- 2-2 HLS 2024-0687 Autopsy Photo Array
- 2-3 HLS 2024-0687 Autopsy Notes



Colorado Bureau of Investigation
INVESTIGATIVE SUPPLEMENT 2024-0687/3

Report Date: 11/07/2024

Primary Information

Description: Initial response and investigation - Agent Somosky
Occurrence From: 11/07/2024 11:45
Occurrence To: 11/07/2024 11:45
Reporting LEO: Somosky, Joe AGT (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
Backup LEO: Sczech, Heather AGT (CRIME SCENE UNIT / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
Report Status: Approved
Report Status Date: 04/28/2025
Approved By: Adams, Chris SA5 (CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)

Agency Reference Numbers

Agency	Case/File Number
Huerfano County Sheriff's Office	240673

Synopsis

Initial response and investigation - Agent Somosky

Address #1 - OCCURRED #1 - 500 S ALBERT AVE

Primary Information

Address: 500 S ALBERT AVE HUERFANO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, WALSENBURG, COLORADO 81089 UNITED STATES
Description: HUERFANO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Judicial District: 3rd Judicial District

Subject #1 - SUBJECT #1 - DeHerrera, Thomas

Primary Information

Subject Name: DeHerrera, Thomas
Record Type: PERSON
Bio: [REDACTED]
Birth Date: [REDACTED]
Juvenile: NO

Addresses

Relationship	Address
HOME ADDRESS	[REDACTED]

Narrative begins on the following page.

SYNOPSIS:

Initial response and investigation - Agent Somosky

ACTION TAKEN:

On 11/07/2024 at 1410 hours I, Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Agent J F Somosky arrived at the Huerfano County, Colorado Sheriff's Office (HCSO) Jail located at 500 S. Albert Avenue in Walsenburg, Colorado. Upon arrival, I contacted HCSO Undersheriff Milan Rapo who provided me a briefing on the inmate hanging incident that had occurred earlier in the day.

Undersheriff Rapo said the deceased inmate, identified as Mr. Thomas Joseph Deherrera Sr. DOB [REDACTED] had initially been booked into the HCSO jail on September 17th, 2024. Undersheriff Rapo explained that the day before on 11/06/2024 Mr. Deherrera had requested medical assistance for a knot on his head at approximately 1530 hours. Undersheriff Rapo said Mr. Deherrera reported that he had been "beat up" by other inmates who shared the same inmate housing unit.

Undersheriff Rapo said HCSO jail personnel would later learn that Mr. Deherrera had received news during a jail telephone call about his children and then attempted to hang himself using a torn inmate towel inside his cell. Other inmates reportedly intervened and stopped the hanging attempt, however Mr. Deherrera had fallen to the ground or made contact with something in the cell causing the head injury that he reported as having been caused by an assault.

Undersheriff Rapo said Mr. Deherrera was transported by ambulance after the unsuccessful hanging attempt on 11/06/2024 to the Spanish Peaks Regional Medical Center located in Walsenburg. Mr. Deherrera would later be returned to the HCSO where he was placed in a single-inmate holding cell and dressed in an anti-suicide jail smock for his safety.

Undersheriff Rapo said Mr. Deherrera was found in his holding cell at approximately 1025 hours apparently hung and unresponsive with his body positioned to the hinge side of the cell door window. Undersheriff Rapo said the last HCSO jail personnel check of Mr. Deherrera was conducted at approximately 0958 hours and at that time Mr. Deherrera was alive and responsive. Undersheriff Rapo said that there had not been any documented incidents involving Mr. Deherrera at the jail until the hanging attempt on 11/06. Undersheriff Rapo said that HCSO case report 240673 had been initiated to document the HCSO response to finding Mr. Deherrera deceased.

Huerfano County Deputy Coroners had responded to the jail and arrived before CBI personnel due to an active, winter weather snowstorm with blizzard conditions that had Interstate 25 closed in both directions between Stem Beach and the Colorado / New Mexico border. When CBI arrived at the HSCSO jail, an autopsy examination had already been scheduled for 0900 on 11/08/2024 at the El Paso County Coroner's Office in Colorado Springs.

Undersheriff Rapo led me to the holding cell area where Mr. Deherrera's body was still located. Present at the holding cells was HCSO LT Jeff Schnedler who told me that Mr. Deherrera's body had been under watch

by an HCSO Deputy since the time he was found unresponsive earlier in the day. Undersheriff Rapo confirmed that no other inmates had access to the interior of Mr. Deherrera's holding cell, cell H101.

HCSO jail Deputy Mark Sanchez was the deputy who conducted the inmate check resulting in finding Mr. Deherrera unresponsive. Deputy Sanchez was unable to get Mr. Deherrera freed from the ligature used to facilitate the hanging and LT Schnedler responded to H101 to assist, ultimately using a "hook knife" to cut Mr. Deherrera down. I would later conduct interviews of LT Schnedler and Deputy Sanchez, please refer to additional investigative supplemental reports for complete details.

Undersheriff Rapo said Emergency Medical Personnel were dispatch and responded to the HCSO jail, arriving approximately 3 to 5 minutes after being requested. EMS personnel attempted emergency medical intervention on Mr. Deherrera for approximately 30-45 minutes, with LT Schnedler reporting that Mr. Deherrera's body still radiated warmth when he was cut down despite not having a pulse and also not breathing. Mr. Deherrera's feet were reportedly touching the ground when found by HCSO Deputies, meaning his body was not fully suspended off the ground. Mr. Deherrera's body was moved out of cell H101 and into the booking area immediately adjacent and outside the cell door to H101 to give medical personnel adequate space to evaluate and treat Mr. Deherrera on scene.

The cell door to H101 was sealed with evidence tape when CBI Crime Scene Analyst (CSA) Heather Szech and I arrived there at 1432 hours. HCSO personnel broke the seals and opened the door to allow CSA Szech access to the interior for documentation and processing purposes.

I noted the Huerfano County Coroner's Office Personnel present at the scene as follows:

- Vonnie Valdez
- Norma Mower
- Dave Mower

The coroner's office personnel took custody of Mr. Deherrera's body and removed him from the scene at 1534 hours.

This case is open and active. CBI investigation is continuing; no further information at this time.

BODY-WORN CAMERA:

Body-worn camera (BWC) footage for this report DOES NOT EXIST

PROPERTY:

None for this report

ATTACHMENTS:

None for this report



Colorado Bureau of Investigation
INVESTIGATIVE SUPPLEMENT 2024-0687/4

Report Date: 12/03/2024

Primary Information

Description: Document LESP for Thomas Deherrera
Occurrence From: 12/03/2024 08:46
Occurrence To: 12/03/2024 14:17
Reporting LEO: Bethel, Jessica ANYL (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
Backup LEO: Somosky, Joe SA3 (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
Report Status: Approved
Report Status Date: 12/05/2024
Approved By: Adams, Chris SA5 (CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)

Synopsis

Document LESP for Thomas Deherrera.

Subject #1 - SUBJECT #1 - DeHerrera, Thomas Joseph

Primary Information

Subject Name: DeHerrera, Thomas Joseph
Record Type: PERSON
Bio: [REDACTED]
Birth Date: [REDACTED]
Juvenile: NO

Personal Information

Height: [REDACTED]
Weight: [REDACTED]
Eye Color: [REDACTED]
Hair Color: [REDACTED]

Addresses

<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Address</u>
HOME ADDRESS	[REDACTED]
HOME ADDRESS	[REDACTED]

Narrative begins on the following page.

SYNOPSIS:

Document LESP workup for Thomas Deherrera.

ACTION TAKEN:

On Tuesday, December 3, 2024, at approximately 0846 hours, I, Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Investigative Analyst Jessica Bethel, received an email request from CBI Agent Joe Somosky.

Agent Somosky requested I complete a workup for Thomas Joseph Deherrera, DOB: [REDACTED]

Utilizing open-source and Law Enforcement websites and databases, I created a Law Enforcement Support Packet (LESP) for Mr. Deherrera.

The completed LESP was provided to Agent Somosky in a follow-up email.

Below is a list of attachments related to the work described in this supplement.

ATTACHMENTS:

4-1 JB Email Request for workup

4-2 JB Deherrera, Thomas Joseph LESP

I have nothing further at this time.



Colorado Bureau of Investigation
INVESTIGATIVE SUPPLEMENT 2024-0687/5

Report Date: 11/07/2024

Primary Information

Description: Interview of HCSO LT Jeffrey Schnedler II
Reporting LEO: Somosky, Joe SA3 (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
Report Status: Approved
Report Status Date: 04/28/2025
Approved By: Adams, Chris SA5 (CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)

Synopsis

Interview of HCSO LT Jeffrey Schnedler II

Address #1 - OCCURRED #1 - 500 S ALBERT AVE

Primary Information

Address: 500 S ALBERT AVE HUERFANO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, WALSENBURG, COLORADO 81089 UNITED STATES
Description: HUERFANO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Judicial District: 3rd Judicial District

Subject #1 - LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #1 - Schnedler, Jeffrey

Primary Information

Subject Name: Schnedler, Jeffrey
Record Type: LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL
Juvenile: NO

Property #1 - Interview of HCSO LT Jeffrey Schnedler II

Primary Information

Property Class: BODY WORN CAMERA
Property Type: BODY WORN CAMERA
Description: Interview of HCSO LT Jeffrey Schnedler II
Property Status: EVIDENCE.COM
Status Date: 11/12/2025
Quantity: 1
Submitted To: EVIDENCE.COM
Alternate Item Number: 5.1
Collected By: Somosky, Joe SA3
Collected Date/Time: 11/07/2024 12:31

Narrative begins on the following page.

SYNOPSIS:

Interview of HCSO LT Jeffrey Schnedler II

ACTION TAKEN:

On 11/07/2024 at 1231 hours I, Colorado Bureau of Investigation Agent J F Somosky conducted an interview of Huerfano County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) Lieutenant Jeffery Schnedler II DOB [REDACTED] at the HCSO jail. LT Schnedler was working at the HCSO jail at the time inmate Thomas Joseph Deherrera Sr. DOB [REDACTED] was found unresponsive and apparently hung in HCSO jail holding cell H101 earlier on 11/07/2024.

Please note that the following is a summary of the interview conducted of HCSO Jeffrey Schnedler and not a verbatim account of that contact. For complete, verbatim details please refer to the recorded BWC video and audio made of the interview.

- LT Schnedler has been a deputy with HCSO since June 2017 and was promoted to Lieutenant in 2023
- LT Schnedler's current shift is 0600 to 1800, Sunday – Monday – and Tuesday
- LT Schnedler said Mr. Deherrera called into the HCSO control room on 11/06/2024, requesting to speak with a deputy
- LT Schnedler said he and HCSO CPT Vigil met with Deherrera and noticed a large bump on the back of his head and on the left side of his forehead
- LT Schnedler said Mr. Deherrera was taken to the booking room, dispatch notified EMS and Mr. Deherrera was subsequently transported to the Spanish Peaks Regional Medical Center for evaluation and treatment
- LT Schnedler said Deherrera initially reported falling off his bunk at approximately 1500 hours, resulting in his head becoming injured
- LT Pino went to the hospital with Deherrera and was present with him the entire time
- In the morning on 11/07, inmates were being given witness statement forms to complete regarding Deherrera's injury and LT Schnedler learned that Deherrera reportedly tried to hang himself on 11/06 but fell and hit his head
- LT Schnedler said on 11/07 Deherrera reported having been beat up for his sandwich
- LT Schnedler said he reviewed CCTV jail video at the time of the reported incident and did not see any recorded activity to corroborate Deherrera's account

- LT Schnedler said inmates appeared to be consoling Deherrera in the pod
- LT Schnedler said he was working on his investigative report for the incident when Deherrera was found unresponsive by Deputy Sanchez
- LT Schnedler he last spoke with Deherrera at H101 at approximately 0900 on 1107
- At that time Deherrera wished to press charges but would not identify his assailants
- LT Schnedler said HCSO staff learned Deherrera used a torn inmate towel for the 11/06 hanging attempt and that the torn towel was later recovered from the trash in the pod
- LT Schnedler said the 11/06 ligature was a white jail issued towel torn into strips – the overnight HCSO staff reportedly threw the torn towel away after finding it
- LT Schnedler was at his computer at 1028 working on the investigative report into the 11/06 Deherrera incident
- LT Schnedler heard the call for assistance for H101 and ran to the cell, taking approximately 2 seconds to get there from his location at the control room
- LT Schnedler said he arrived at H101 and Deputy Sanchez said Deherrera was unresponsive
- LT Schnedler said he looked through the cell door food tray pass through slot and told Deherrera to “quit messing around”
- LT Schnedler said he reached through the slot, felt Deherrera’s arm and noted that it felt limp
- LT Schnedler said control unlocked the cell door and he and Deputy Sanchez found that Deherrera’s body was blocking the door and preventing it from being fully opened
- LT Schnedler said he forced his body to squeeze through the small opening in the cell door
- LT Schnedler found Deherrera to still be dressed in his anti-suicide smock
- LT Schnedler said Deherrera’s eyes were staring in one direction, his lips were purple and his skin tone appeared to be lighter
- LT Schnedler said he grabbed Deherrera’s body, lifted him up and noted that a green colored material appeared to be around his neck and attached to the to top cell door hinges
- LT Schnedler said it was clear to him that Deherrera had hung himself, but noted that he was not fully suspended with both feet touching the cell floor

- LT Schnedler requested EMS through HCSO dispatch
- LT Schnedler said he was chest to chest with Deherrera while he tried to lift him up and relieve the pressure on his neck caused by the ligature
- LT Schnedler said he noted the ligature was twisted tight around Deherrera's neck and that that ligature was the same color as the anti-suicide smock and bedding
- LT Schnedler tried to twist Deherrera's body to loosen the twisted ligature and called for Deputy Sanchez to come inside the cell and help
- LT Schnedler said he and Deputy Sanchez continued to untwist the ligature by turning Deherrera's body
- LT Schnedler said eventually a trustee brought a safety "hook knife" to the cell and he cut Deherrera down
- Deherrera was placed on the cell floor and his anti-suicide smock was removed
- Deherrera's pulse was checked and none was found
- Deherrera was moved out of the cell and into the booking room to give HCSO personnel more room to perform emergency medical intervention
- Chest compressions were started on Deherrera
- A Lucas 3 chest compression device was introduced, EMS personnel arrived on scene and activated it
- EMS performed emergency medical intervention on Deherrera for approximately 30-45 minutes, vital signs were reportedly never observed during this process
- LT Schnedler said the last inmate check on Deherrera was performed by him at 0958 and at that time Deherrera was standing, walking around and the interior cell lights were on
- LT Schnedler said he asked Deherrera, "Hey man you alright?" and Deherrera reportedly replied, "Yep."
- LT Schnedler said Deherrera had to be moved from his previous pod because he was bullying fellow inmates approximately three weeks ago, resulting in Deherrera being locked down
- Deherrera was very polite to HCSO personnel

- Deherrera reportedly received a call from his attorney before the hanging attempt on 11/06 and delivered news regarding his children - LT Schnedler was unsure if the call was recorded

Having no further questions for LT Schnedler I ended the interview.

This case is active and open. CBI investigation is continuing; no further information at this time.

BODY-WORN CAMERA:

Body-worn camera (BWC) footage for this report EXISTS. Please refer to the property tab of this ACISS report and the corresponding entry in CBI Evidence.com for complete details.

PROPERTY:

None for this report

ATTACHMENTS:

None for this report



Colorado Bureau of Investigation
INVESTIGATIVE SUPPLEMENT 2024-0687/6

Report Date: 04/15/2025

Primary Information

Description:	Changing status of case - Case closed assistance given
Occurrence From:	04/15/2025 10:34
Occurrence To:	04/15/2025 11:04
Reporting LEO:	Somosky, Joe SA3 (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
Report Status:	Approved
Report Status Date:	04/29/2025
Approved By:	Adams, Chris SA5 (CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)

Synopsis

Changing status of case - Case closed assistance given

Narrative begins on the following page.

SYNOPSIS:

Changing status of case - Case closed assistance given

ACTION TAKEN:

On 04/15/2025 at 1034 hours I, CBI Agent J F Somosky changed the status of this investigation from open and active to Closed – Assistance Given. The CBI investigation has concluded at this time.

This case is closed – assistance given.

BODY-WORN CAMERA:

Body-worn camera (BWC) footage for this report DOES NOT EXIST

PROPERTY:

None for this report

ATTACHMENTS:

None for this report



Colorado Bureau of Investigation
INVESTIGATIVE SUPPLEMENT 2024-0687/7

Report Date: 11/07/2024

Primary Information

Description: Interview HCSO Detentions Deputy Marc A Sanchez Jr
Occurrence From: 11/07/2024 15:37
Occurrence To: 11/07/2024 16:07
Reporting LEO: Somosky, Joe SA3 (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
Report Status: Approved
Report Status Date: 05/15/2025
Approved By: Adams, Chris SA5 (CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)

Synopsis

Interview HCSO Detentions Deputy Marc A Sanchez Jr

Address #1 - OCCURRED #1 - 500 S ALBERT AVE

Primary Information

Address: 500 S ALBERT AVE HUERFANO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, WALSENBURG, COLORADO 81089 UNITED STATES
Description: HUERFANO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Judicial District: 3rd Judicial District

Subject #1 - LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #1 - Sanchez, Marc A JR

Primary Information

Subject Name: Sanchez, Marc A JR
Record Type: PERSON
Bio: [REDACTED]
Birth Date: [REDACTED]
Juvenile: NO

Employment Information

Occupation: HCSO Detentions Deputy

Telephones / E-Addresses

Relationship	Number/E-Address
HOME	[REDACTED]

Property #1 - Interview HCSO Detentions Deputy Marc A Sanchez Jr

Primary Information

Property Class: BODY WORN CAMERA
Property Type: BODY WORN CAMERA
Description: Interview HCSO Detentions Deputy Marc A Sanchez Jr
Property Status: EVIDENCE.COM
Status Date: 11/12/2024
Quantity: 1



Colorado Bureau of Investigation
INVESTIGATIVE SUPPLEMENT 2024-0687/7

Report Date: 11/07/2024

Property #1 - Interview HCSO Detentions Deputy Marc A Sanchez Jr - Continued

Primary Information - Continued

Submitted To:	EVIDENCE.COM
Alternate Item Number:	2024-0687/7
Collected By:	Somosky, Joe SA3
Collected Date/Time:	11/07/2024 15:37

Narrative begins on the following page.

SYNOPSIS:

Interview HCSO Detentions Deputy Marc A Sanchez Jr

ACTION TAKEN:

On 11/07/2024 at 1537 hours I, Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Special Agent (SA) J F Somosky conducted an interview of Huerfano County Sheriff's Office HCSO Detentions Deputy Marc A. Sanchez Jr DOB [REDACTED]. The interview was conducted in an interview room located within the HCSO Jail facility located at 500 South Albert Avenue in Walsenburg, Colorado. Please note that this report is a summary of the interview of Deputy Sanchez and not a verbatim account of that contact. For complete, verbatim details please refer to the body-worn camera (BWC) recording made of the interview.

I introduced myself to Deputy Sanchez and displayed my CBI credentials. I provided Deputy Sanchez with my CBI business card and explained I was part of the investigative team assisting the HCSO with the investigation into the apparent hanging death of inmate Thomas DeHerrera DOB [REDACTED]. Deputy Sanchez provided me with his personal identifying information at my request.

Deputy Sanchez said he has been employed with the HCSO for just over three months, having started with the office in July 2024. Deputy Sanchez confirmed his position as a non-sworn / non-POST certified HCSO Detentions Deputy. Deputy Sanchez said he received initial training when he was first hired by the HCSO. Which included being familiarized with operating the detentions facility from central control. Deputy Sanchez estimated the training he received to serve as a Detentions Deputy took approximately one month. Deputy Sanchez explained that while training, he was supervised and trained by the majority of the ranking HCSO jail staff. Deputy Sanchez said his training took place during the day shift which is scheduled between 6am and 6pm (12 hour shifts).

Deputy Sanchez said he is currently assigned to the day shift, with Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday as his scheduled days off. Deputy Sanchez confirmed that the inmate hanging incident occurred on his first day of this work week. Deputy Sanchez said he began his shift on 11/07/2024 at 0600 without incident.

I asked Deputy Sanchez if he was briefed by the outgoing shift about Mr. DeHerrera's incident the day prior. Mr. DeHerrera was transported to the Spanish Peaks Regional Health Center after reporting to HCSO jail staff that he had been injured. Deputy Sanchez said he was made aware of a confrontation between Mr. DeHerrera and his two cellmates. Deputy Sanchez said he was made aware that because of what occurred the day before, Mr. DeHerrera was placed on "lockdown" and on "suicide watch." Deputy Sanchez recalled Mr. DeHerrera's unsuccessful suicide attempt being mentioned when he received the pass-down briefing at the beginning of his shift.

I reminded Deputy Sanchez that Mr. DeHerrera had been an inmate at HCSO since September of 2024 and asked if he recalled interacting with Mr. DeHerrera prior to today. Deputy Sanchez explained that he had talked to Mr. DeHerrera a few times during pod checks and whenever Mr. DeHerrera would ask him questions. Deputy Sanchez said he did not have any issues with Mr. DeHerrera but knew Mr. DeHerrera had been moved into his current pod after an issue with the inmates in his previous pod assignment.

I asked Deputy Sanchez how many times he personally checked on Mr. DeHerrera in his holding cell since the beginning of his shift on 11/07/2024. Deputy Sanchez said he checked on Mr. DeHerrera approximately six to eight times. Deputy Sanchez confirmed that he and other HCSO jail staff log their inmate checks in the jail log book and on a paper located outside of Mr. DeHerrera's cell. Deputy Sanchez said he recalled his last check on Mr. DeHerrera before "everything started" taking place at approximately 10:26am.

Deputy Sanchez said for the 10:26am check he approached Mr. DeHerrera's holding cell from the central control room. Deputy Sanchez said he approached the holding cell pass-through slot to conduct his visual check. Deputy Sanchez said the pass-through slot for Mr. DeHerrera's holding cell was left open to facilitate checks due to the poor condition of the holding cell door window. Deputy Sanchez said he looked through the pass-through slot and saw Mr. DeHerrera's arm, leading him to believe that Mr. DeHerrera was "just up against the door."

Deputy Sanchez said he knocked on the holding cell door and window while asking Mr. DeHerrera if he "was ok" and "are you good?" Deputy Sanchez said Mr. DeHerrera "wouldn't respond." Deputy Sanchez said he used his radio to alert the other HCSO jail personnel that Mr. DeHerrera was not responding. Deputy Sanchez said when he visually checked on Mr. DeHerrera he was able to tell that Mr. DeHerrera was still dressed in his anti-suicide smock, a green single piece outer garment commonly referred to as a "turtle suit." The anti-suicide smock is used to prevent incarcerated individuals from harming themselves with a noose or other objects. They are made with a tear-resistant material.

Deputy Sanchez said he didn't reach through the holding cell pass-through slot to try and touch Mr. DeHerrera and waited for HCSO LT Jeff Schnedler to arrive and assist. Deputy Sanchez said when LT Schnedler arrived at the holding cell, he reached through the cell door pass-through slot and grabbed Mr. DeHerrera's arm. Deputy Sanchez said LT Schnedler told Mr. DeHerrera "hey stop messing around" and realized something wasn't normal. Deputy Sanchez said the door to the cell was remotely opened (via the jail control room) at which point he and LT Schnedler entered inside.

I asked Deputy Sanchez how long it took for LT Schnedler to arrive at the holding cell to assist and he estimated it taking "less than a minute." Deputy Sanchez said LT Schnedler entered into the holding cell first and saw that Mr. DeHerrera appeared to have hung himself. Deputy Sanchez said initially, only LT Schnedler entered into the holding cell because the location of Mr. DeHerrera made it difficult for them both to enter with LT Schnedler struggling to get inside to help by himself. Deputy Sanchez said once inside, LT Schnedler moved Mr. DeHerrera's body enough so that Deputy Sanchez could also enter inside to help.

Deputy Sanchez said once inside, LT Schnedler tried to lift Mr. DeHerrera's body up to relieve the pressure of the ligature around his neck. Deputy Sanchez said LT Schnedler was struggling to lift Mr. DeHerrera's weight by himself so he moved in to help. Deputy Sanchez said together, he and LT Schnedler were able to lift Mr. DeHerrera's body up so none of his body was touching the floor. Deputy Sanchez explained that initially, Mr. DeHerrera's feet were still touching the cell floor. Deputy Sanchez said when he and LT Schnedler entered into the holding cell, Mr. DeHerrera's body was positioned facing the inside of the cell door.

Deputy Sanchez said once he was able to lift Mr. DeHerrera's body off the cell floor, he began rotating Mr. DeHerrera's body to loosen the ligature around his neck. Deputy Sanchez described and demonstrated how he used a bear hug with his chest to Mr. DeHerrera's back to facilitate lifting him off the floor. Deputy Sanchez explained that the ligature around Mr. DeHerrera's neck was twisted to apply greater pressure, and recalled it being "very tight." Deputy Sanchez estimated having to rotate Mr. DeHerrera's body at least ten to fifteen times in order to loosen the ligature.

Deputy Sanchez said he was still trying to rotate Mr. DeHerrera's body inside the cell when a trustee brought LT Schnedler a safety / hook knife. Deputy Sanchez said LT Schnedler used the hook knife to cut the ligature, freeing Mr. DeHerrera's body. Deputy Sanchez said LT Schnedler used the hook knife to cut the ligature off of Mr. DeHerrera's neck at which point they placed Mr. DeHerrera's body on the floor of the cell. Deputy Sanchez said additional HCSO Deputies and the HCSO Undersheriff began arriving shortly afterwards.

Deputy Sanchez said he and LT Schnedler had placed Mr. DeHerrera's body on the cell floor with his back to the floor. Deputy Sanchez said he grabbed Mr. DeHerrera's right arm, LT Schnedler grabbed Mr. DeHerrera's left arm and HCSO SGT Eihar grabbed Mr. DeHerrera by the legs and the three of them moved Mr. DeHerrera's body from inside of the holding cell to the booking room floor immediately adjacent and outside of the holding cell. Deputy Sanchez explained that moving Mr. DeHerrera allowed more room for HCSO personnel and later emergency medical personnel to provide emergency medical intervention efforts for Mr. DeHerrera.

Deputy Sanchez said SGT Eihar and Deputy Dominguez took turns giving CPR to Mr. DeHerrera until the LUCAS device, a mechanical chest compression system designed to deliver continuous, high-quality CPR during cardiac arrest was applied. Deputy Sanchez said EMS took over the life-saving efforts for Mr. DeHerrera. Deputy Sanchez estimated EMS worked on Mr. DeHerrera between thirty minutes and one hour. Deputy Sanchez recalled EMS personnel being on the phone with who he assumed was someone from the local hospital during life-saving efforts. Deputy Sanchez said one the EMS determination was made to cease life-saving efforts for Mr. DeHerrera, he and SGT Eihar placed a blanket over Mr. DeHerrera's body.

I asked Deputy Sanchez how Mr. DeHerrera seemed during the checks that occurred before the 10:26am check where he found Mr. DeHerrera unresponsive. Deputy Sanchez said Mr. DeHerrera, "seemed ok" and recalled being able to look inside the cell to see that Mr. DeHerrera was unharmed as well. Deputy Sanchez said on each check prior to finding Mr. DeHerrera unresponsive, he was able to see Mr. DeHerrera's face and recalled Mr. DeHerrera responding to him verbally. Deputy Sanchez said he recalled seeing Mr. DeHerrera being dressed in his anti-suicide smock and seeing Mr. DeHerrera's bottle of water but did not recall seeing Mr. DeHerrera's inmate blanket during the checks.

I asked Deputy Sanchez if there was anything else he would like to add to his statement or if there was anything I didn't ask him that he felt should be covered. Deputy Sanchez said when he lifted Mr. DeHerrera's body off the holding cell floor he recalled Mr. DeHerrera taking what he felt may have been his last breath. Deputy Sanchez described this breath as the air coming out of Mr. DeHerrera's lungs. Deputy Sanchez said he discussed this with LT Schnedler and CPT Vigil prior to CBI arrival at the HCSO jail.

Deputy Sanchez described the process that he and other HCSO jail personnel log their daily activities inside the facility during their shift. Deputy Sanchez said the master jail log book is located within the control room. Having no further questions for Deputy Sanchez I concluded the interview.

This case is open and active. CBI investigation is continuing; nothing further at this time.

BODY-WORN CAMERA:

Body worn camera footage for this report EXISTS. Please refer to the property tab of this ACISS report and the corresponding entry in CBI Evidence.com for complete details.

PROPERTY:

PROPERTY CLASS	PROPERTY TYPE	DESCRIPTION	PROPERTY STATUS
1. BODY WORN CAMERA	BODY WORN CAMERA	Interview HCSO Detentions Deputy Marc A Sanchez Jr	EVIDENCE.COM

ATTACHMENTS:

None for this report



Colorado Bureau of Investigation
INVESTIGATIVE SUPPLEMENT 2024-0687/8

Report Date: 05/15/2025

Primary Information

Description: Interview of HCSO CPT Lea Vigil
Occurrence From: 11/07/2024 16:22
Occurrence To: 11/07/2024 16:52
Reporting LEO: Somosky, Joe SA3 (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
Report Status: Approved
Report Status Date: 05/15/2025
Approved By: Adams, Chris SA5 (CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)

Synopsis

Interview of HCSO CPT Lea Vigil

Address #1 - OCCURRED #1 - 500 S ALBERT AVE

Primary Information

Address: 500 S ALBERT AVE HUERFANO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, WALSENBURG, COLORADO 81089 UNITED STATES
Description: HUERFANO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Judicial District: 3rd Judicial District

Subject #1 - LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #1 - Vigil, Lea

Primary Information

Subject Name: Vigil, Lea
Record Type: LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL
Juvenile: NO

Property #1 - Interview of HCSO CPT Lea Vigil

Primary Information

Property Class: BODY WORN CAMERA
Property Type: BODY WORN CAMERA
Description: Interview of HCSO CPT Lea Vigil
Property Status: EVIDENCE.COM
Status Date: 11/12/2024
Quantity: 1
Submitted To: EVIDENCE.COM
Alternate Item Number: 2024-0687/8
Collected By: Somosky, Joe SA3
Collected Date/Time: 05/15/2025 07:22

Narrative begins on the following page.

SYNOPSIS:

Interview of HCSO CPT Lea Vigil

ACTION TAKEN:

On 11/07/2024 at 1537 hours I, Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Special Agent (SA) J F Somosky conducted an interview of Huerfano County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) Captain (CPT) Lea Vigil. The interview was conducted in an interview room located within the HCSO Jail facility located at 500 South Albert Avenue in Walsenburg, Colorado. Please note that this report is a summary of the interview of CPT Vigil and not a verbatim account of that contact. For complete, verbatim details please refer to the body-worn camera (BWC) recording made of the interview.

I introduced myself to CPT Vigil and displayed my CBI credentials. I provided CPT Vigil with my CBI business card and explained I was part of the investigative team assisting the HCSO with the investigation into the apparent hanging death of inmate Thomas DeHerrera DOB [REDACTED] CPT Vigil provided me with her personal identifying information at my request.

CPT Vigil has been with the HCSO for approximately two years. Prior to joining the HCSO, CPT Vigil worked at Pueblo School District 60 for eight and a half years and before that, twelve years as a corrections officer. CPT Vigil's current assignment at HCSO is as the Detentions Captain. CPT Vigil is currently assigned to the HCSO jail day shift that is scheduled between 6am and 6pm with Friday, Saturday, and Sunday off.

CPT Vigil confirmed that she was working the day prior, 11/06/2025 when inmate Thomas DeHerrera reportedly attempted suicide in his inmate housing unit. CPT Vigil said she and HCSO LT Schnedler interacted with Mr. DeHerrera after he requested to speak with them using the jail intercommunications speaker. CPT Vigil said as soon as Mr. DeHerrera walked up to the pod door to meet with her and LT Schnedler she could see a contusion on his head. CPT Vigil demonstrated where she observed the contusion on Mr. DeHerrera's head by using her right hand to touch the right front side of her own head to show where she observed Mr. DeHerrera's injury. When I asked CPT Vigil to confirm where she observed the injury to Mr. DeHerrera's head she clarified that the injury could have been on the front left side of his head.

CPT Vigil said she asked Mr. DeHerrera what occurred that caused the injury to his head. CPT Vigil said Mr. DeHerrera told her that he had fallen off his bunk. CPT Vigil said Mr. DeHerrera turned his head to show her another contusion on the back of his head. CPT Vigil said she asked Mr. DeHerrera how he injured both the front and back of his head by falling off of his bunk. CPT Vigil said Mr. DeHerrera replied, "I fell off my bunk twice."

CPT Vigil said Emergency Medical Personnel (EMS) were requested to respond to the jail and Mr. DeHerrera was moved from his inmate housing unit to the booking / holding area. CPT Vigil said she was concerned about the head injury she observed on Mr. DeHerrera and wanted him to be evaluated by EMS. CPT Vigil said EMS determined that Mr. DeHerrera needed to seek additional medical evaluation and treatment for the head injury. EMS directed the jail control room to notify dispatch of the impending transport

of Mr. DeHerrera from the jail to the Spanish Peaks regional medical facility in Walsenburg and that a patrol HCSO Deputy was required to escort Mr. DeHerrera. CPT Vigil said HCSO LT Pino accompanied Mr. DeHerrera in the ambulance to the hospital and remained with him throughout the duration of the medical evaluation and treatment of the head injury. CPT Vigil said Mr. DeHerrera was transported by ambulance at approximately 3pm.

CPT Vigil said after Mr. DeHerrera was transported, she returned to D pod and began gathering information about what happened from the other inmates housed there. CPT Vigil said the inmates “immediately” told her “this guy’s trying to kill himself.” CPT Vigil said the inmates told her that they had caught Mr. DeHerrera trying to hang himself twice inside of his cell. CPT Vigil said she learned that Mr. DeHerrera had reportedly shredded his inmate towel to use as a ligature to hang himself. CPT Vigil said the inmates “turned him loose” when they found Mr. DeHerrera attempting to hang himself and threw the improvised ligature in the pod trash. CPT Vigil said the inmates brought her the remnants of the towel Mr. DeHerrera reportedly attempted to hang himself with and she confirmed that it had been modified in a manner that would facilitate that purpose. CPT Vigil explained that the towel had been torn length-wise to create one long strip and that the towel was also wet to the touch.

CPT Vigil said prior to being transported to the hospital, Mr. DeHerrera began insinuating that other inmates had assaulted him. CPT Vigil said Mr. DeHerrera said the other inmates were trying to take his sandwich. CPT Vigil said Mr. DeHerrera declined to provide the names of the inmates who reportedly assaulted him, and she locked down D Pod as a precaution while she supervised the investigation into what had occurred. CPT Vigil said Mr. DeHerrera provided a description of the inmates who reportedly assaulted him, and HCSO jail staff determined that in D pod the inmates who matched the same general physical description included inmates [REDACTED] DOB [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] DOB [REDACTED]

CPT Vigil said inmates [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were cooperative and told her that Mr. DeHerrera was trying to kill himself. CPT Vigil said for the safety of the facility, both inmates were locked down while she supervised the investigation. CPT Vigil said when LT Pino returned from the hospital with Mr. DeHerrera, LT Pino told her that the hospital recommended Mr. DeHerrera seek mental health services and be placed on around-the-clock observation. CPT Vigil explained that in the jail, this is referred to as a “suicide watch.” CPT Vigil confirmed that the medical clearance report that accompanied Mr. DeHerrera back from the hospital also documented these recommendations.

CPT Vigil initiated the suicide watch protocol for Mr. DeHerrera upon his return to the HCSO jail. CPT Vigil said all of Mr. DeHerrera’s clothing items were taken from him with the exception of a anti-suicide smock, often referred to as a “turtle suit” and blanket. CPT Vigil said Mr. DeHerrera was not allowed to have even socks or underwear while under suicide watch. CPT Vigil said that Mr. DeHerrera was required to be checked on by HCSO jail staff every thirty minutes while under suicide watch, and those checks began immediately after Mr. DeHerrera was placed in a single inmate holding cell located in the booking / holding area.

CPT Vigil remained at the HCSO jail past her 6pm end of shift time to wait for Mr. DeHerrera to return from the hospital. CPT Vigil said when Mr. DeHerrera found out he was going to be placed under suicide watch he became “mad.” CPT Vigil said Mr. DeHerrera told her that the doctor who treated him at the hospital did not

recommend that action but CPT Vigil knew otherwise due to the documentation on Mr. DeHerrera's medical clearance report.

CPT Vigil explained that a copy of Mr. DeHerrera's medical clearance report was sent to the medical provider who provides medical services for the HCSO jail. CPT Vigil said the medical provider [REDACTED]

CPT Vigil said she and LT Schnedler spoke with Mr. DeHerrera in the morning on 11/07/2024 and learned that he wanted to provide a written statement to document his report of being assaulted the day before. CPT Vigil said LT Schnedler brought Mr. DeHerrera a written statement form to complete at approximately 8am. Mr. DeHerrera completed the written statement and CPT Vigil conferred with HCSO CPT LaPorte and HCSO Undersheriff Milan Rapo about providing Mr. DeHerrera's cellmates with written statement forms to complete about the incident. CPT Vigil said two inmates completed written statements before Mr. DeHerrera was found apparently hung and unresponsive in his assigned holding cell. CPT Vigil said she believed inmates [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] completed the written statements but she had not had an opportunity to review their statements as of the date/time of the interview. CPT Vigil said normally there were only two personnel working in the jail for the day shift but today they had a third, HCSO Detentions Deputy Marc Sanchez.

CPT Vigil said before Mr. DeHerrera was found unresponsive in his cell, she was in the jail control room with Deputy Sanchez. CPT Vigil said Deputy Sanchez told her he was going to complete the check for "holding" where Mr. DeHerrera was housed under suicide watch protocol. CPT Vigil said she began to write out the corresponding entry in the jail log book and awaited the radio notification from Deputy Sanchez that the check of Mr. DeHerrera had been accomplished.

CPT Vigil said Deputy Sanchez transmitted the message, "he's not responding" over the radio. CPT Vigil directed LT Schnedler to respond to the holding cell area and assist Deputy Sanchez. CPT Vigil said LT Schnedler ran out of the control room and she monitored his response on the jail closed circuit security cameras (CCTV). CPT Vigil said she watched LT Schnedler arrive at Mr. DeHerrera's assigned holding cell and signal using his hand for her to remotely unlock and open the holding cell door. CPT Vigil said she unlocked the holding cell door from the control room. CPT Vigil said the jail CCTV cameras do not show a view inside of the holding cell so she was unable to see what was taking place inside.

CPT Vigil said she made a safety "hook" knife available if LT Schnedler and Deputy Sanchez needed it and requested EMS to respond to the jail via dispatch. CPT Vigil said trustee inmate [REDACTED] DOB [REDACTED] came to the control room to ask for scissors to bring to LT Schnedler and Deputy Sanchez, and she provided him with the safety "hook" knife to bring to them. CPT Vigil explained that she was unable to depart the control room herself and leave it unmanned.

I asked CPT Vigil if Mr. DeHerrera had any issues with her or the HCSO jail staff. CPT Vigil said Mr. DeHerrera did not cause problems for the staff but there were issues between him and other inmates. CPT Vigil said Mr. DeHerrera had reportedly started a fight with another inmate in B pod over wanting to be "pod boss." CPT Vigil explained that once an inmate is confirmed to have been involved in an altercation with another inmate they are separated for their safety and the safety of other inmates and staff. CPT Vigil said Mr.

DeHerrera was placed in “lock down” for three days and afterwards he was reassigned to D pod. CPT Vigil said Mr. DeHerrera wanted to return to B pod after his lock down because he had learned the other inmates in the housing unit had “told on him” regarding the altercation over wanting to be the pod boss.

I asked CPT Vigil about the telephone call from his attorney Mr. DeHerrera received at the jail about his children. CPT Vigil said she was on scheduled days off when this phone call occurred but confirmed that it happened. CPT Vigil was unsure of what was communicated during the phone call but knew from Mr. DeHerrera’s inmate case file that the Department of Human Services (DHS) were involved with him and his family. CPT Vigil did not know what day Mr. DeHerrera received the phone call and was informed by jail staff upon her return to duty from scheduled days off that he had been allowed to receive it. Having no further questions for CPT Vigil I concluded the interview.

This case is open and active. CBI investigation is continuing; no further information at this time.

BODY-WORN CAMERA:

Body-worn camera (BWC) footage for this report EXISTS. Please refer to the property tab of this ACISS report and the corresponding entry in CBI Evidence.com for complete details.

PROPERTY:

PROPERTY CLASS	PROPERTY TYPE	DESCRIPTION	PROPERTY STATUS
1. BODY WORN CAMERA	BODY WORN CAMERA	Interview of HCSO CPT Lea Vigil	EVIDENCE.COM

ATTACHMENTS:

None for this report



Colorado Bureau of Investigation
INVESTIGATIVE SUPPLEMENT 2024-0687/9

Report Date: 11/08/2024

Primary Information

Description: **Autopsy Examination - Thomas DeHerrera at El Paso County Coroner**
Occurrence From: **11/08/2024 09:20**
Occurrence To: **11/08/2024 12:20**
Reporting LEO: **Somosky, Joe SA3 (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)**
Report Status: **Approved**
Report Status Date: **05/21/2025**
Approved By: **Adams, Chris SA5 (CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)**

Synopsis

Autopsy Examination - Thomas DeHerrera at El Paso County Coroner

Address #1 - OCCURRED #1 - 2741 E LAS VEGAS ST

Primary Information

Address: **2741 E LAS VEGAS ST El Paso County Coroner's Office, Colorado Springs, COLORADO 80906 UNITED STATES**
Description: **El Paso County Coroner's Office**
Regional Offices: **PUEBLO**
Judicial District: **4th Judicial District**

Narrative begins on the following page.

SYNOPSIS:

Autopsy Examination - Thomas DeHerrera at El Paso County Coroner

ACTION TAKEN:

On 11/08/2024 at 0920 hours I, Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Special Agent (SA) J F Somosky attended the autopsy examination of Thomas DeHerrera DOB 07/12/1974 at the El Paso County, Colorado Coroner's Office located at 2741 East Las Vegas Street in Colorado Springs.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

| [REDACTED]

| [REDACTED]

A PDF copy of El Paso County Coroner's Autopsy Report 24-1042 is attached with this report as reference (attachment 1JS).

This case is open and active. CBI investigation is continuing; no further information at this time.

BODY-WORN CAMERA:

Body-worn camera (BWC) footage for this report DOES NOT EXIST.

PROPERTY:

None for this report

ATTACHMENTS:

9-1JS Joseph Deherrera - Autopsy Report



Colorado Bureau of Investigation

TIP T2024-4282

Entry Date: 11/07/2024 11:21

Primary Information

Call Taker:	Somosky, Joe SA3 (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
Brief Description:	Huerfano County Sheriff's Office Request for Assistance - Inmate Hanging death
Reporters Name:	Sheriff Bruce Newman
Reporters Business Phone:	(719) 989-1600
Reporters Address:	500 S Albert Ave, Walsenburg, CO 81089
Source Reliability:	Reliable
Content Evaluation:	Confirmed
Occurred Date:	11/07/2024 10:00
Type:	DEATH INVESTIGATION
Sub-Type:	In Custody Death
Status:	CLOSED
Status Date:	11/07/2024 00:00
Related Case:	2024-0687

Synopsis

HCSO request for crime scene and investigative assistance for a reported inmate hanging. CBI Pueblo Crime Scene and Major Crimes responding to assist.

ACISS Case 2024-0687 initiated to document CBI investigation

Current Assignment

Assigned To:	Somosky, Joe SA3 (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)
AGENCY:	COLORADO BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
DIVISION:	INVESTIGATIONS
OFFICE:	PUEBLO
Assigned By:	Somosky, Joe SA3 (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)

Followup Information

Reply Date:	11/07/2024 11:47
Reply From Operator:	Somosky, Joe SA3 (PUEBLO / CBI - Pueblo Field Colorado Bureau of Investigatio)