

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS – PLYMOUTH DISTRICT
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NEWS RELEASE
FEBRUARY 28, 2017

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INVESTIGATION CLOSED IN SUICIDE DEATH OF LEO MARINO

BROCKTON – Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz has announced that his office has concluded its investigation into the suicide death of a man at Bridgewater State Hospital.

On April 8, 2016, at approximately 9 p.m., State Police Detectives assigned to the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office responded to the Bridgewater State Hospital facility after being advised of the death of Leo Marino (08/31/72).

Following Mr. Marino's death, DA Cruz initiated a thorough investigation headed by prosecutors, State Police Detectives and the Grand Jury. As part of the investigation, many witnesses were interviewed from Bridgewater State Hospital, including mental health workers, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, nurses, correctional officers, a facility psychiatrist and superintendent of the facility. Family members of Mr. Marino were also interviewed. The investigation included the viewing of video surveillance camera footage, reviewing of medical and mental health records and review of photographic evidence. Ultimately, no one was charged criminally in connection with Mr. Marino's death.

Investigation

Mr. Marino arrived at Bridgewater State Hospital for treatment in October, 2015, having been diagnosed with major depressive disorder. Mr. Marino had an extensive history of threatening to harm himself, including ingesting materials such as paint chips, parts of bedding, Styrofoam cups and toilet paper. As a result, Mr. Marino spent a significant amount of time in Bridgewater State Hospital's Intensive Treatment Unit (ITU).

On April 8, 2016, while in the ITU, Mr. Marino was placed on a toilet paper restriction, as a result of recently ingesting toilet paper. The restriction was properly documented in Mr. Marino's property sheet which was attached outside his cell and all mental health workers were made aware of the toilet paper restriction on Mr. Marino prior to the start of their shifts.

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Stationary surveillance cameras were located inside each cell and recording during this time period. At approximately 5 p.m. on April 8, 2016, a psychiatrist on duty at Bridgewater made routine rounds and evaluated Mr. Marino. The psychiatrist found Mr. Marino to be alert, responsive and did not believe that any further restrictions beyond the toilet paper restriction were necessary for Mr. Marino.

Over the next two hours on cell surveillance video, three mental health workers were assigned at different times to watch Mr. Marino. The mental health workers observed Mr. Marino one-on-one and entered observations and status updates on Mr. Marino into a log every 10 minutes. Investigators viewing the surveillance video noted the Mr. Marino is observed eating part of his Styrofoam cup at lunch and the cup and tray were immediately removed from Mr. Marino's cell. Further video footage shows Mr. Marino request toilet paper and the mental health workers, observing that Mr. Marino had mucus coming from his nose, gave Mr. Marino toilet paper. During the two-hour span, Mr. Marino requested and was given toilet paper on numerous occasions, and would turn his back to the mental health workers and appear to place the toilet paper in his mouth from time to time.

At approximately 7 pm, medical staff and correctional officers responded to a medical emergency in a cell across from where Mr. Marino was being housed. At approximately 7:30 pm, staff were still on scene working when a new mental health worker began his shift to observe Mr. Marino. The mental health worker told investigators that Mr. Marino appeared more quiet than usual and did not speak. The mental health worker attempted to get Mr. Marino's attention, at which time he turned around and the worker observed a large amount of mucus coming from his nose. The mental health worker immediately handed Mr. Marino an amount of toilet paper within his restrictions. On surveillance video, Mr. Marino takes the toilet paper and turns his back to the mental health worker. The worker is captured on video surveillance attempting to get Mr. Marino's attention once again and Mr. Marino turned toward the worker with additional mucus around his nose and mouth, and he appeared to be choking. The mental health worker immediately called for assistance and on-site medical staff and officers in the area responded. CPR and chest compressions and other life-saving measures were performed. Mr. Marino was transported to Morton Hospital in Taunton where he was pronounced dead upon arrival at 8:33 pm.

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On April 13, 2016, the state Office of the Chief Medical Examiner conducted an autopsy on Mr. Marino and determined that the cause of death to be asphyxia due to an airway obstruction caused by tissue paper and the manner of death was ruled "suicide."

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