



LCLE – DEATH IN CUSTODY REPORTING ACT

Death in Custody Reporting Act (DCRA; Pub. L. No. 113-242) requires states to report to the Attorney General information regarding the death of any person who is either; detained, under arrest, in the process of being arrested, en route to be incarcerated, or is incarcerated at a municipal or county jail, state prison, state-run boot camp prison, boot camp prison that is contracted out by the state, any state or local contract facility, or other local or state correctional facility (including any juvenile facility). The Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement reports death-in-custody data for the state.

EXAMPLES OF REPORTABLE AND NON-REPORTABLE SCENARIOS

1. What deaths are required to be reported under DCRA?

Per the statute, states are to report “information regarding the death of any person who is detained, under arrest, or is in the process of being arrested, is en route to be incarcerated, or is incarcerated at a municipal or county jail, state prison, state-run boot camp prison, boot camp prison that is contracted out by the state, any state or local contract facility, or other local or state correctional facility (including any juvenile facility).”

2. The following are scenarios where a decedent commits suicide while being detained by law enforcement officers:

a. Response is for a person with a mental disturbance or a distraught person where the result of police custody would have been to transport them for mental health evaluation prior to determining any criminal charges.

Yes. This is reportable.

b. Response is for a person who is a suspect in a crime, or a person wanted for questioning, whether an arrest warrant has been issued or not.

Yes. This reportable.

3. Police officers pursue a burglar, during which the suspect produces a weapon threatening officer. The suspect is then shot and killed by the officers without an officer ever having “put hands on the suspect” to physically attempt an arrest prior to the shooting.

Yes. This is reportable.

4. The following are scenarios where a death occurred during police pursuit of a robber:

a. Crashes and dies as a result of officers engaged in an active vehicle pursuit.

Yes. This is reportable.

b. Crashes and dies although officers terminated the pursuit for safety reasons and no police vehicles were obviously in pursuit.

No. This is not reportable.

5. Are deaths that occur to bystanders during law enforcement pursuit considered reportable?

No. These are not reportable.

6. Police contact (e.g., a brief detention such as a traffic stop, questioning an individual who matches a suspect description) results in an individual being delayed from going about their intended business. The individual then has a medical emergency and dies.



Yes. If the incarcerated person, absent the medical condition, would have been in prison at the time of death, it counts as a reportable death. Although the person was not physically in a correctional facility at the time of death, the death is still one of an "incarcerated individual."

8. Are deaths occurring in halfway houses included?

Deaths occurring in a halfway house are included if the halfway house is under contract with the state or local government. A death occurring in a private halfway house that is not under contract with a reporting entity is not reportable.

9. Should we report the location of the event leading to the death of the decedent or the location where the decedent actually dies (e.g., an offender is in critical condition following a reportable event and transported to a hospital where they are pronounced dead)?

The location of the death is where they died not the location of the event leading to the death.

10. Is a decedent's overdose death, which occurs before an officer arrives on-scene, reportable?

This is not a reportable death.

Reporting Deadlines

Reporting deadlines are listed below. However, you may complete the form any time during the quarter in which a death occurred, instead of waiting until due date.

Program Reports Due	Reporting Period	Quarter
January 10	October 1 – December 31	1st
April 10	January 1 – March 31	2nd
July 10	April 1 – June 30	3rd
October 10	July 1 – September 30	4th

If you have any questions or issues completing this form, please contact **Linda Gautier** at 225.342.1703.

Please complete Death in Custody form below:

Agency Name *

Lincoln Parish Detention Center / Lincoln Parish Sheriff's Office

Contact Name *

Chad

Alexander

First

Last

Contact Phone Number *

(318)-251-5111

Contact Email *

calexander@lpsheriff.org

Reporting Year *

2021

Select the Reporting Period *



3rd Quarter: July 1 - September 30

4th Quarter: October 1 - December 31

Decedent Information

Please provide the following decedent information. If you have multiple deaths in custody, you will report one at a time.

First Name *

Domerious

Middle Name

D.

Last Name *

Jones

Gender *

- 1. Male
- 2. Female
- 3. Other gender identity

Race (Select all that apply) *

- 1. American Indian or Alaska Native
- 2. Asian
- 3. Black or African American
- 4. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- 5. White
- 6. Unknown

Ethnicity *

- 1. Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin
- 2. Not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin
- 3. Unknown

Birth Year (YYYY) *

1999

If unknown, please enter "9999"

Date of Death *

09/24/2021

Time of Death *

13:00

Location of Death - Location Name (if not applicable, enter N/A) *

Lincoln Parish Detention Center

This could be the name of a facility, place of business, or other designation for the location of death.

Location of Death - Street Address *

170 Road Camp Road



Location of Death - State *

LA

Zip Code *

71270

If the event causing the death occurred in any of the following facilities, please indicate the appropriate facility below. If the event causing the death did not occur in one of the facilities listed below, please use the "None of the above" answer choice. *

- 1. Municipal or county jail
- 2. State prison
- 3. State-run boot camp prison
- 4. Contracted boot camp prison
- 5. Any state or local contract facility
- 6. Other local or state correctional facility (to include any juvenile facilities)
- 7. None of the above

Please list the name of the department or agency that detained, arrested, or was in the process of arresting the deceased. *

Lincoln Parish Sheriff's Office / Lincoln Parish Detention Center

Please indicate the manner of death (Mark only one). *

- A. Execution
- B. Accident
- C. Death attributed to use of force by a law enforcement or corrections officer
- D. Homicide (e.g., an incident between two or more incarcerated individuals resulting in a death)
- E. Natural causes
- F. Suicide
- G. Unavailable, investigation pending
- H. Other

Please provide a brief description of the circumstances leading to the death (e.g., details surrounding an event that may have led to the death, the number and affiliation of any parties involved in an incident, the location and characteristics of an incident, other context related to the death, etc.). *

3- Hypertensive cardiovascular disease.
A. Cardiomegaly with left ventricular hypertrophy, 500 grams.
B. Nephrosclerosis.

The in-custody death was ultimately investigated by members of the N/E Louisiana Sheriff's Investigative Unit, reviewed by the Third Judicial District, District Attorney's Office.

669 of 5000 max characters.

Submit

Sheriff investigation found 'no crimes' in inmate death



Print story updated with expanded version - Feb. 4 @ noon

When neighboring sheriff's departments first investigated the 2021 in-custody death of Lincoln Parish Detention Center inmate Demerious Jones, they determined staff had committed "no criminal activity" in the incident.

Jones' family, however, believes the jail staff allowed Jones to suffer from diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA) for three days and did not admit him to a hospital or administer insulin until shortly before his death.

Jones was on day six of a 60-day sentence for misdemeanor probation violations when he died.

His mother, Franequa Jones, filed suit in federal court against the detention center, its governing board, two prison nurses and 15 unnamed sheriff's deputies in September of 2022, but she died less than two weeks later.

Demerious' sibling, Key'zarious Jones, is now seeking to take up the suit as a substitute plaintiff.

On Friday the *Ruston Daily Leader* obtained via public records request more than 30 pages of an investigative report conducted by the Northeast Louisiana Sheriff's Investigative Unit (NLSIU) that began soon after Jones was declared dead on Sept. 24, 2021.

The Lincoln Parish Sheriff's Office has run the jail since 2013, per an agreement with the jail commission.

The NLSIU comprises the LPSO and six other sheriff's departments in the region and was formed to investigate use-of-force incidents and in-custody deaths among its member agencies.

Causes of death

The investigation files include Jones' autopsy report, performed by forensic pathologist Dr. Frank Peretti out of Little Rock, Arkansas.

The report seems to confirm that Jones was diabetic and did suffer from DKA leading up to his death but states that wasn't the primary cause.

Jones died of hypertensive cardiovascular disease with a contributory factor of diabetic ketoacidosis, Peretti concluded.

A "contributory factor" is a cause that contributed to a death but is not necessarily related to the primary cause.

Hypertensive heart disease, caused by prolonged elevated blood pressure, often makes the left ventricle, one of the heart's main chambers, grow, which can lead to heart failure.

The autopsy showed a "markedly enlarged heart," as well as signs that Jones had chronic kidney disease caused by diabetes.

No crime, investigators say

According to the NLSIU report, Ouachita Parish Sheriff's deputy Sgt. Michael McLain conducted the investigation into this in-custody death, assisted by Union Parish Sheriff's deputy Sgt. Mike Bryan.

The evidence they considered included:

- Written statements from all LPDC personnel who responded to the incident
- Medical paperwork from the jail
- Surveillance footage of the incident
- The autopsy report
- Nearly 200 pages of Jones' medical records obtained via search warrant from Northern Louisiana Medical Center in Ruston. These date back more than a year before Jones' incarceration.

"After review of all evidence related to this incident, I have not been able to determine any criminal act," McLain wrote.

Once concluded, the NLSIU turned its report over to the 3rd Judicial District Attorney's office.

Different scopes

The lawsuit describes Jones' bout with DKA as a three-day event that progressively worsened as staff continued to provide little in the way of care.

It alleges Jones began recording high blood glucose readings on the first day, deteriorating from early symptoms like lethargy, confusion and extreme thirst to later displaying urinary incontinence and vomiting.

By Sept. 23, 2021, the suit claims Jones could no longer walk under his own power and was transferred by wheelchair from his shared dorm to a solitary cell.

Over his final day, Jones lacked the strength to rise from the floor and was forced repeatedly to lie in pools of his own vomit and urine, the suit states.

Unlike the suit's narrative, the NLSIU investigation appears to have largely focused on that final day.

Each of the seven written statements from staff on the scene begins retelling events on Sept. 24, 2021. Six of them begin shortly before or shortly after Jones was found unresponsive on the floor of his cell, less than an hour before he would be officially declared dead at the hospital.

They describe their respective roles in finding Jones and administering CPR, to no effect, until Ruston Fire Department emergency medical technicians arrived.

The statement given by Jennifer Plunkett, one of the two licensed practical nurses named as defendants in the suit, begins earlier that morning.

By then, the suit claims, Jones had already been experiencing symptoms for two days.

The NLSIU didn't record a statement from Danielle Weaver, the other LPN defendant who examined Jones on Sept. 22, 2021, nor from the deputies who observed Jones' allegedly deteriorating condition on Sept. 23 and moved him to solitary.

According to McLain's final report, the surveillance footage he reviewed

began as Jones was being moved into his isolated cell.

Neither investigator's report, nor any of the written statements, make mention of Jones' blood pressure ever being checked, despite the autopsy's finding that hypertension led to his death.

Prior history

The NLSIU report shows LPDC staff explained the incident to investigators by referencing Jones' prior history in the prison.

"I was advised Jones is known at LPDC due to him being a repeat offender and being housed at LPDC on numerous occasions," McLain writes in his final report. "I was advised Jones is a diabetic who frequently neglects his health."

Bryan referenced similar conversations.

"We also learned during our investigation that Jones had a history of mental illness and was known to rub feces and urine on his body," Bryan's report reads.

Ruston Daily Leader archived arrest reports show Jones had prior charges including simple criminal damage to property, theft less than \$1,000, battery of a health care professional, unauthorized entry and theft from a motor vehicle.

The suit continues

The civil lawsuit, filed in September of 2022, is ongoing, with attorneys slated to meet and develop a case management plan on Feb. 10.

Key'zarious Jones filed a motion Thursday to carry on the suit in the stead of the deceased Franequa Jones.

Franequa died on Oct. 6, 2022, less than two weeks after filing the suit on

behalf of Demerious Jones.

Key'zarious Jones is Demerious' only sibling and Franequa's only surviving child, according to the motion, and is heir to both.

U.S. District Judge Terry A. Doughty referred the motion to Magistrate Judge Kayla D. McClusky, who as of Friday had yet to rule on it.

One of the defendants is the Lincoln Parish Detention Center Commission, the body that by state statute is responsible for the jail.

Its members: Sheriff Stephen Williams, 3rd Judicial District Attorney John Belton, Ruston Police Chief Steve Rogers, Lincoln Parish Police Jury President Richard Durrett, and police juror Sharyon Mayfield.

More to come

The NLSIU report and the lawsuit give detailed accounts of the incident that sometimes contradict.

Expect more coverage from these and other records in an upcoming edition of the *Ruston Daily Leader*, and online at rustonleader.com.