



KEN PAXTON

ATTORNEY GENERAL *of* TEXAS

CUSTODIAL DEATH REPORT

Agency Information

CDR Number: 25-700-CJ

Version Type: ORIGINAL
VERSION

Report Date: 9/8/2025 2:21 PM

Status: Submitted

Agency/Facility Information

Agency Name: Gonzales County
Sheriff's Office

Agency Address: PO BOX 1757

Agency City: Gonzales

Agency State: TX

Agency Zip: 78629

Director Information

Director Salutation: Sheriff

Director First Name: Keith

Director Middle Name:

Director Last Name: Schmidt

Reporter Name: Jared Brumme

Reporter Email: jbrumme@co.gonzales.tx.us

Decedent Information

Identity of Deceased

First Name: Jessie

Middle Name:

Last Name: Villarreal

Suffix:

Date of Birth: 6/29/1971

Sex: Male

Race: Anglo or White

Age At Time Of Death: 54

Date/Time of Custody (arrest, incarceration) (mm/dd/yyyy hh:mm AM/PM):

Date/Time of Custody or
Incident: 7/13/2025 2:45 PM

Date/Time of Death (mm/dd/yyyy hh:mm AM/PM):

Death Date and Time: 7/30/2025 12:58
AM

Manner / Cause of Death

Has a medical examiner or coroner conducted an evaluation to determine a cause of death?

Medical Examiner/Coroner Yes, results
Evaluation?: pending

What was the manner of death? (select only one)

Manner of Death: Pending autopsy
results

Medical Cause of Death:

Medical Cause of Death:

Unknown at this time, autopsy results are pending from the Travis County Medical Examiners Office

Had the decedent been receiving treatment for the medical condition that caused the death after admission to your jail's jurisdiction?

Medical Treatment: Yes

If death was an accident, homicide or suicide, who caused the death?

Who caused the death?: Not applicable

If a weapon caused the death, what type of weapon caused the death? (Hold CTRL to select all that apply)

Type of weapon that caused death?: Not Applicable

Was the cause of death the result of a pre-existing medical condition or did the decedent develop the condition after admission?

Pre existing medical condition?: Pre-existing medical condition

If death was an accident, homicide or suicide, what was the means of death?

Means of Death: Not applicable, cause of death was illness/natural cause

Location / Custody Information

Where did the event causing the death occur?

Street Address: 1713 East Sarah
Dewitt Drive

City: Gonzales

County: Gonzales

Zip: 78629

What location category best describes where the event causing the death occurred?

Location Category: Law Enforcement
Facility

What type of custody/facility was the Decedent in at the time of death:

Type of Custody: County Jail

Specific type of custody/facility:

Specific Type of Custody/Facility:

Jail - single cell

What was the time and date of the deceased's entry into the law enforcement facility where the death occurred (mm/dd/yyyy hh:mm AM/PM):

Entry Date Time: 7/13/2025 12:17
PM

Where did the death occur?

Death Location: Law enforcement
facility/booking
center

General Information

Did any other law enforcement agencies respond to calls for service related to this incident?

Other Agencies Respond?: Yes

What were the most serious offense(s) with which the deceased was (or would have been) charged with at the time of death?

Offense 1:

Possession of a Controlled Substance PG1<1G

Offense 2:

Tamper/Fabricate Physical Evidence with Intent to Impair

Offense 3:

N/A

Were the Charges:: Filed

What were the types of charges or reason for contact? (Hold CTRL to select all that apply)

Type of Offense: Alcohol / drug
offense

At any time during the incident and/or entry into the law enforcement facility, did the decedent display or use a weapon?

Decedent display/use of
weapons: No

At any time during the incident and/or entry into the law enforcement facility, did the decedent:

Attempt to Injure Others?: No

At any time during the incident and/or entry into the law enforcement facility, did the decedent:

Appear intoxicated (alcohol or
drugs): No

Make suicidal statements?: No

Exhibit any mental health
problems?: Unknown

Exhibit any medical problems?: Yes

At any time during the incident and/or entry into the law enforcement facility, did the decedent:

Barricade self or initiate standoff?:	No	Resist being handcuffed or arrested?:	No
Physically attempt/assault officer(s):	No	Gain possession of officer's weapon:	No
Verbally threaten other(s) including law:	No	Escape or attempt to escape/flee custody:	No
Attempt gain possession officer's weapon:	No		

Was the deceased under restraint in the time leading up to the death or the events causing the death?

Under Restraint: No

Summary of Incident

Summary of How the Death Occurred: (max. 30,000 characters)

Summary:

On July 29, 2025 at approximately 10:14PM, I, Sergeant Investigator Jared Brumme with the Gonzales County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigation Division received a phone notification from Captain Sean Newlin notifying me of a death that occurred in the Gonzales County Jail. Captain Newlin advised that CID assistance was being requested and also advised that I needed to contact the Texas Department of Public Safety Ranger Division and notify them of the death.

At approximately 10:16 PM, I made contact with Texas Ranger Conde Benoist and notified him of the in custody death and requested his assistance at the Gonzales County Jail. At approximately 10:23 PM I contacted Investigator Brent Gindler also with the Gonzales County Sheriff's Office and requested his assistance at the Gonzales County jail. I then promptly responded to the Gonzales County Jail.

As I was responding, Ranger Benoist and I discussed what immediate actions needed to be taken. I was advised and requested to secure the cell, identify every person who had access to the jail cell and obtained their identifying information. I was also asked to gather any known medical information or documents pertaining to the inmate.

At approximately 10:18 PM, I called the Gonzales County Jail and was transferred to Jail Corrections Officer Sergeant Dylan Cantrell, I requested Sergeant Cantrell to lock down the cell that the inmate was in and not allow anybody in or out of that cell. I also requested that he obtain original copies of the Cell Check Log, the Master Cell Check Log and the Control Room Log. I also asked Sergeant Cantrell to write down a list of names of every person who entered the cell and provide that to me when I arrived on scene.

Upon my arrival at the jail, I was informed the inmate who was deceased was identified as Jessie Villarreal W/M DOB 06-29-1971.

I was notified Villarreal was located in Segregation cell 15 located within the Gonzales County Jail. As I was walking in the Sheriff's Office, I observed Gonzales County Sheriff Keith Schmidt and Chief Deputy Dennis

Jahns were also at the Sheriff's Office. I secured my duty weapon in the lockbox provided in Dispatch and proceeded to cell 15.

At 22:41 I entered the jail and walked to cell 15. I observed the door was closed and nobody was standing around the cell. There was a black cloth, covering the window to view inside the cell. I removed the black cloth from the window so that I could view inside the cell. As I looked inside the cell, I observed the cell to be in disarray with scattered papers throughout the cell. As I continued looking around the cell, I observed Villarreal laying supine with his head near the door and feet towards the shower area in the cell. He was covered by a white blanket and I could not view the entirety of his body due to the way he was laying. I did not open the cell door at that time.

I then left the immediate area of cell 15 and proceeded to the jail supervisors' office. Once inside the office I observed Jail Lieutenant Kenneth West, Jail Sergeant Briansha Polk and Sergeant Cantrell were inside the supervisor's office. I was provided a list of the officers' names who were on duty for the jail at that time as well as the three EMS Personnel who were on scene and provided medical aid to Villarreal. I requested all three jail supervisors obtain original log reports and provide to me so that I could get them to the Ranger upon his arrival. I then left the jail area and proceeded to the Sheriff's Office where I waited for Ranger Benoist to arrive.

Once Ranger Benoist arrived, he was escorted into the jail and to cell 15. We began the investigation at approximately 12:29 AM. At approximately 12:31 AM Ranger Benoist entered cell 15 for the first time and began taking numerous photos. Investigator Gindler was also taking photos at my request, as part of the administrative investigation. At approximately 12:42 AM I requested that Ranger Benoist performed an intercom test on cell 15 to ensure that it was functioning and the control room operator received the notification. The intercom system was functioning properly and answered the intercom.

Once Ranger Benoist completed his investigation, he requested that a Justice of the Peace be notified at approximately 12:49 AM. I contacted Gonzales County Dispatch and ask them to contact Justice of the Peace Precinct One Judge Deidre Voigt. Shortly thereafter Judge Voigt called me on my cell phone. She advised me that she would not be responding to the jail however, she would conduct her inquest via telephone.

Judge Voigt pronounced time of death at 12:58 AM.

I requested Investigator Brent Gindler notify Villarreal's next of kin of his death. At approximately 1:15 AM, I was advised the Yoakum Police Department had conducted the death notification to Villarreal's sister who was identified to me as Rosie Villarreal.

At approximately 1:15 AM, with permission from Judge Voigt, the next rotation funeral home was requested to respond to the Gonzales County Jail to take custody of Villarreal and transport him to the Travis County Medical Examiner's office for an autopsy to be completed. I was advised that Seydler Hill Funeral Home would be in route.

Once Seydler Hill arrived on scene at approximately 1:51 am several on duty jail staff assisted Seydler Hill with securing Villarreal and escorting him out of the jail to their transport vehicle.

Once Seydler Hill took possession of Villarreal and left the jail, Ranger Benoist and I returned to my office where he began conducting interviews with the on duty jail staff.

First to be interviewed was Dylan Tyler Cantrell W/M DOB 09-07-2001, Sergeant Cantrell was asked how long he has worked for the Gonzales County Jail. He stated two years and three months. Sergeant Cantrell was asked how long he had been a sergeant for the Gonzales County Jail, he stated 5 to 6 months. Sergeant Cantrell was asked what shift he was working today in the jail. He stated he came on duty at 2:30 PM and was scheduled to go off duty at 11 PM.

Ranger Benoist asked Sergeant Cantrell to recall the best that he could what events occurred tonight. Sergeant Cantrell stated at approximately 21:35 Corrections Officer Espinoza called him on the radio and requested his assistance at cell 15. Sergeant Cantrell stated when he arrived at the cell, he was informed that inmate Villarreal was not responsive. Sergeant Cantrell stated he checked Villarreal and observed that he was cold to the touch and he did not get a response from the inmate. Sergeant Cantrell stated that Villarreal was laying on his right side and he was facing the wall. Sergeant Cantrell stated he checked for a pulse and did not locate a pulse. He stated at that time he called for EMS to respond using his radio. Sergeant Cantrell stated that he then rolled Villarreal on his back and started Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). Sergeant Cantrell stated that he requested a blood pressure cuff and the AED From the booking area be brought to cell 15. Sergeant Cantrell stated that he continued doing CPR until EMS arrived. Sergeant Cantrell stated that once EMS arrived, they asked the jail staff to move Villarreal from the bed, to the floor. Sergeant Cantrell stated that once EMS arrived, they took over CPR and continued to work on Villarreal for approximately 25 to 30 minutes before they stopped CPR. Sergeant Cantrell estimated that he performed approximately 3 to 4 rounds of CPR before EMS arrived. Ranger Benoist then concluded the interview at approximately 1:31 AM.

Next Ranger Benoist called in Corrections Officer Isaac Ivan Espinoza W/M DOB 10-30-2001 into the office to interview him. Ranger Benoist began the interview at 1:35 AM.

Correction Officer Espinoza was asked how long he had worked for the Gonzales County Jail. He stated approximately two years, he was asked what shift he was working tonight. He replied he was working 5:45 PM through 6 AM. Espinoza was then asked to describe the events that occurred tonight. Officer Espinoza stated at approximately 9:20 to 9:30 PM, he was performing med pass on the jail block, and he responded to cell 15 to pass out medication to inmate Villarreal. He stated upon opening the door he observed that Inmate Villarreal was not awake. Officer Espinoza stated he called out to Villarreal but did not receive a response so he began shaking Villarreal in attempt to wake him up. Officer Espinoza stated that he observed Villarreal was cold to the touch. At that time he called for Sergeant Cantrell to come and assist him in cell 15. Officer Espinoza stated he stood by as CPR was conducted on Villarreal. Officer Espinoza stated he did not perform CPR on Villarreal. At approximately 1:41 AM range Benoist ended the interview.

Next Ranger Benoist called in Corrections Officer Christopher Ryan Kaiser W/M DOB 06-14-2002 into my office. Ranger Benoist began the interview at approximately 1:48 AM. Corrections Officer Kaiser stated that he had been employed with the Gonzales County Sheriff's Office Jail Division for approximately four months and also had approximately one year with the Wilson County Sheriff's Office prior to his employment with Gonzales County. Officer Kaiser stated he was assigned to work 5:45 PM to 6 AM.

Officer Kaiser stated that he was in booking when he heard everything start at approximately 9:35 PM. Officer Kaiser stated that he heard Officer Espinoza call for Sergeant Cantrell on the radio and requested that Sergeant Cantrell respond to cell 15. Officer Kaiser stated he responded as well to see if he could help. Officer Kaiser stated when he arrived he saw Sergeant Cantrell doing CPR on Villarreal. Officer Kaiser stated that he stayed with Sergeant Cantrell and together they would switch doing CPR to give the other person a break. Officer Kaiser stated when EMS arrived they took over CPR. Officer Kaiser estimated that he performed 2 to 3 CPR rotations on Villarreal and conducted compression only CPR. Officer Kaiser stated when EMS arrived they requested that Villarreal be moved to the floor from where he was on the bed. Officer Kaiser stated he assisted in moving Villarreal to the floor. Ranger Benoist then ended the interview at approximately 1:54 AM.

Ranger Benoist then called Corrections Officer Albert Camarillo Junior, W/M DOB 08-21-2002 into the office. Ranger Benoist began the interview at approximately 2:22 AM. Officer Camarillo stated that he had been a Corrections Officer with the Gonzales County Sheriff's Office Jail Division for approximately four months and was working the 6 PM to 6 AM shift. Officer Camarillo stated that he was on the unit and was near cell six when he heard everything start on the radio. Officer Camarillo state that he responded to cell 15 to see what was going on. He stated he was instructed to go obtain the blood pressure machine and bring it back to cell 15. Officer Camarillo stated that he did not render any medical treatment to Villarreal and only stood by and took orders as they were given to him by Sergeant Cantrell. Ranger Benoist then ended the interview at approximately 2:28 AM

Once these interviews were completed, we ended the investigation for the night.