DETAINED PERSON DEATHS ON RIKERS ISLAND IN 2022–23

Elmore Robert Pondexter
DATE OF DEATH: 2/27/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Overdose
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Insufficient Touring: Did not complete tours every 30 minutes; did not bring Pondexter to the clinic after his 2-hour hold.
Security & PREA Violation: Cell window was obstructed by a sheet.

George Pagan
DATE OF DEATH: 3/17/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Sepsis
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Medical Agreements: DOH failed to arrange Pagan’s 10 medical appointments in the last 6 months leading to his death; Pagan did not receive necessary medication.
Delayed Medical Response: On Date of No news: One medical staff stated that George Pagan had medical emergencies
Unstaffed Post: No officer on post until 3:30pm.

Herman Diaz
DATE OF DEATH: 3/18/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Choked on Drange
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Medical Staff Performed By DOH: The “C” Post Officer refused to perform office on emergency.
No Medical Staff: Floor Officer on Post. Insufficient Staffed Post: “C” Post Officer was not allowed access to the sick inmate to assist him.

Dashawn Carter
DATE OF DEATH: 5/7/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Suicide (Hanging)
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: No ‘Mental Health Designation’: Carter had just returned from a mental health evaluation and was noted to be free of suicidal ideation.

Mary Yehudah
DATE OF DEATH: 5/18/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Suspected Diabetic Ketaosis
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Possibly Deficient Medical Care: Correctional Health Services failed to do urinalysis; DOH failed to provide medical checkpoint.
Insufficient Touring: DOH staff did not tour every 30 minutes as required.

Antonio Bradley
DATE OF DEATH: 6/18/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Suicide (Hanging)
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Negligence: The DOC did not quickly respond, so he was already deceased.

Anibal Carrasquillo
DATE OF DEATH: 6/20/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Overdose
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Insufficient Tours: Understaffed Building: Closure of DOB: Days before his overdose.

Albert Drye
DATE OF DEATH: 6/21/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Unknown
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Still no solid details here yet.

Elijah Muhammad
DATE OF DEATH: 7/11/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Suspected Overdose
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Likely Delayed Medical Attention: Preliminary evidence that Muhammad had been noted earlier in the day with symptoms of overdose, but was ignored by staff.
Likely Insufficient Tours: Four months had already passed by the time Muhammad’s body was found.

Michael Lopez
DATE OF DEATH: 7/15/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Suicide (Hanging)
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Existing details but likely neglect by corrections staff, who did not intervene in drug use.

Ricardo Cruciani
DATE OF DEATH: 8/15/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Suicide (Hanging)
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Negligence: DOC did not immediately respond to the situation of an inmate hanging.

Michael Nieves
DATE OF DEATH: 8/25/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Suicide (Still His Threat)
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Security Violation: P. Nieves did not have a key that opens the gate.

Kevin Bryan
DATE OF DEATH: 9/4/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Suicide (Hanging)
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Potentially Unstaffed Post in Understaffed Building.

Gregory Acedo
DATE OF DEATH: 9/20/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Taken Off Life Support
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Potentially Unstaffed Post in Understaffed Building.

Elmore Robert Pondexter
DATE OF DEATH: 9/22/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Taken Off Life Support
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Potentially Unstaffed Post in Understaffed Building: Potential was also noted to have been in contact with alcohol.

Erick Tavera
DATE OF DEATH: 10/22/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Suicide (Hanging)
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Likely Insufficient Tours: Prior to his death, the DOC was not aware of any visits or medical appointments.

Gilberto Garcia
DATE OF DEATH: 10/31/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Suspected Overdose
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Likely Insufficient Tours: Almost 5 years to the day he entered Rikers in October 2017.

Edgar Mojica
DATE OF DEATH: 12/11/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Suspected Overdose
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Likely Insufficient Tours: Correction Department sources state that Mojica was discovered by other detainees, who alerted staff.
Several attempts were made to save him, but he died in his cell before he was able to receive necessary medical care.

Marvin Pines
DATE OF DEATH: 2/12/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Suicide (Under Investigation)
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Insufficient Touring: Correction Officers were suspended as a result of Marvin’s death.

Rubio Zhao
DATE OF DEATH: 5/16/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Fatal Injury (Under Investigation)
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Insufficient Medical Supervision: Rubio was being held in Rubio’s most recent injury in a mental health unit on Rikers Island.

Joshua Valles
DATE OF DEATH: 5/30/22
CAUSE OF DEATH: Assaulted by Staff
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: HSU didn’t monitor that Valles appeared to sustain a head injury and the DOB does not report that any injury occurred.

Felix Tavera
DATE OF DEATH: 7/4/23
CAUSE OF DEATH: Suspected Overdose
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Felix was taken to a clinic for medical care following complaints of chest pain, where he later died.
DOH did not monitor the medical care and the DOC did not state any medical appointments were given.

Ricky Howell
DATE OF DEATH: 7/6/23
CAUSE OF DEATH: Brain
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Ricky died of stage 4 cancer in Bellevue Hospital Prison Ward. He was arrested on Sep 20, 2022.

William Johnstone
DATE OF DEATH: 7/15/23
CAUSE OF DEATH: Suspected Overdose
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: William was found unresponsive in his cell and was taken to Queens Hospital.

Curis Davis
DATE OF DEATH: 7/23/23
CAUSE OF DEATH: Taken Off Life Support
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: An Affiliate Deputy Warden signed the black but did not know he was in the area when Curtis died.

Donny Ulbera
DATE OF DEATH: 8/22/23
CAUSE OF DEATH: Unknown
ADMINISTRATION FAILURES: Donny Ulbera, age 35, was found unresponsive in the cell in the area where Curtis died.
There was no one in the room to check staff.