

November 28, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Review of Inmate Death Complete

The death of inmate Lonny Levi Bradley, age 25, at the Barnes County Correctional Facility on October 5, 2018, was formally determined to be suicide after reviews by the State Medical Examiner, the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation, and the North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Medical Examiner Mark A. Koponen, concluded that Bradley's death was caused by asphyxia from self-hanging. Correctional officers found Bradley hanging from a bed sheet in a jail bathroom, and were unable to revive Bradley while waiting for emergency personnel to arrive.

A suicide note, with Bradley's handwriting, was recovered by deputies.

Bradley had previously expressed suicidal ideation and had attempted suicide at the jail on September 17, 2018. He was transported to the North Dakota State Hospital and received treatment for 10 days, before being cleared to return to the jail on September 27. Bradley had been under increased observation at the time of his death.

Records indicate that Bradley made contact with correctional officers at 7:11 p.m. on October 5. Rounds were conducted at 7:33 p.m. Bradley was not in his cell. At 7:36 p.m., correctional officers returned and entered Bradley's cell when no direct observation could be made. He was then found in the attached bathroom.

An internal review conducted by the Jail Administrator, Health Care Administrator, and the Barnes County Sheriff's Office concluded that the correctional officers felt they were adequately trained in responding to an emergency situation. In addition to annual suicide prevention training, training will be added regarding recognition of suicidal behaviors. BCCF also plans to implement additional procedures to ensure that inmates continue to receive appropriate care and observation while incarcerated.

The most recent data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics indicates that from 2000 to 2014, suicide was the leading cause of death in local jails nationwide, and the suicide rate increased 28% from 2009 to 2014.¹

State and local criminal justice officials, and behavioral health professionals, have begun the process of improving healthcare and reducing recidivism among offenders and potential offenders in the community through the state's Free Through Recovery program, launched at the beginning of 2018. More information is available at www.behavioralhealth.nd.gov/addiction/free-through-recovery.

Additionally, the Behavioral Health Coalition has been active in Valley City since 2012. The group is looking at ways to fill service gaps for people in need of behavioral health services in the community. The State's Attorney, Sheriff, Jail Medical Director, and Health Care Administrator are members of the coalition.

¹ <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/mlj0014st.pdf>

Overall, suicide is the ninth leading cause of death in North Dakota, and the second leading cause of death for those between the ages of 15 and 24. In 2015, 1,870 North Dakota residents called the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.²

Help is available by calling the Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or 1-800-273-TALK. Persons seeking additional resources may contact the 2-1-1 helpline to be connected to local services for mental health and addiction issues.

² http://www.ndhealth.gov/suicideprevention/image/cache/ND_Suicide_Prevention_Plan_2017_to_2020.pdf