



Sheriff J. Al Cannon, Jr., County of Charleston, South Carolina

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Charleston County Sheriff's Office Statement on the Death of Joyce Curnell

(Charleston County, SC) On February 24, 2016, the Charleston County Sheriff's Office was made aware that Evans Moore Law Firm filed a "Notice of Intent to File a Medical Malpractice Lawsuit" against Carolina Center for Occupational Health with the Charleston County Clerk of Court on behalf the estate of Joyce Curnell.

On July 21, 2015, Joyce Curnell was being treated at Roper Saint Francis Hospital for gastroenteritis. During Joyce Curnell's hospitalization, Charleston County Consolidated Dispatch received a call from, Javone Curnell, the son of Joyce Curnell, claiming that his mother was located at Roper Saint Francis Hospital and that she had an active warrant for her arrest. Officers from the Charleston Police Department responded to Roper Saint Francis Hospital. They confirmed that Joyce Curnell had an active bench warrant for her arrest. As a result, Charleston Police Department requested deputies from the Charleston County Sheriff's Office respond to the hospital. Subsequently, and after being medically cleared for release and discharged by the hospital, Joyce Curnell was taken into custody and transported to the Sheriff Cannon Detention Center without incident. Per policy, Ms. Curnell received a medical screening and was later assigned to a housing unit. On July 22, 2015, shortly before 5:00 p.m., members of the Detention Center's staff discovered Joyce Curnell unresponsive in her bed in housing unit B3M. After exhaustive efforts had been made to revive her, Charleston County Emergency Medical Service pronounced Joyce Curnell dead.

As a standard procedure of the Charleston County Sheriff's Office, whenever there is in-custody death or a use of deadly force incident, we request the South Law Enforcement Division to conduct an independent investigation into the incident. SLED investigated this death, and the cause was determined to be natural.

The Charleston County Sheriff's Office takes the welfare and safety of its inmate population seriously. Our Agency has made many advances in ensuring that we consistently provide a healthy environment for all prisoners regardless of their circumstances.

The reverence of life is paramount to the mission of the Sheriff's Office. The "Intent to File Notice" is a step in the legal process. Discussing this matter in this current forum, any further, is inappropriate and unfair to the family of Joyce Curnell.

Note: On July 22, 2015, a news release about this incident was posted on the Sheriff's Office website under press releases.

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