



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

MARK G. PETERS
COMMISSIONER

80 MAIDEN LANE
NEW YORK, NY 10038
212-825-5900

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**CONTACT: DIANE STRUZZI
BETSY PISIK
(212) 825-5931**

**DOI INVESTIGATION RESULTS IN ARREST OF CITY CORRECTION OFFICER ON CHARGES OF
FABRICATING INSPECTION AND TOURS OF INMATES AT AMKC**

--An inmate was found in grave condition in overheated cell after these missed tours--

Mark G. Peters, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced today the arrest of a City Correction Officer with the New York City Department of Correction ("DOC") on charges of falsifying DOC records to indicate the Correction Officer had completed visual checks of inmates in a mental health housing area at the Anna M. Kross Center ("AMKC") on Rikers Island. In fact, the defendant had not performed any of these checks and left her shift prior to her relief arriving. Inmate Jerome Murdough was found in his cell lying in a pool of blood and vomit and unresponsive by the relief Correction Officer, shortly after the defendant prematurely left her shift. Murdough was pronounced dead a short time later. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner ("OCME") noted in their reports that the inmate's cell was 101 degrees Fahrenheit and the inmate's body temperature was 103 degrees Fahrenheit and that Murdough died from hyperthermia due to exposure to heat.

The arrest is part of DOI's ongoing investigation into illegal activity at Rikers Island. That investigation has already resulted in the arrests of 11 Correction Officers, supervisors and other staff that work in the City jails, as well as more than 30 inmates. It has also resulted in multiple disciplinary referrals and a report on issues related to contraband smuggling.

DOI Commissioner Mark G. Peters said, "Fabricating documents and covering up misconduct are serious crimes that foster the broader problems of violence, contraband smuggling, and security breaches at the City jails. DOI's recommendations have already helped bring about significant changes in security and screening and we continue to work with Commissioner Ponte to come up with workable solutions."

DOC Commissioner Joseph Ponte said, "The death of Jerome Murdough was a tragedy. The safety of staff and inmates in the jail system is my top priority. As part of meaningful reform at the Department of Correction, we are doing everything possible to prevent a similar tragedy from happening again."

DOI worked with DOC's Investigation Division on this matter and Commissioner Peters thanked Commissioner Ponte and his staff, particularly, DOC's Investigation Division and Supervising Investigator Christina Falzon, for their help throughout this investigation.

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CAROL LACKNER, 34, of Oakland Gardens, N.Y. has been charged with Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, which are class E felonies, and Official Misconduct, a class A misdemeanor. Upon conviction a class E felony is punishable by to four years in prison and a class A misdemeanor is punishable by up to a year's incarceration.

According to DOI's investigation and the charges outlined in the indictment, the defendant was on duty overnight and responsible for checking on inmates in the AMKC mental observation housing area where she was assigned. DOC video surveillance shows the defendant failed to check on the well-being of any inmates during her overnight tour between 11:30 p.m. February 14, 2014 and 2:30 a.m. February 15, 2014. However, the investigation found the defendant falsely noted in the DOC logbook that she had verified the count of the housing area, inspected the housing area, and conducted five tours of the housing area, when, in fact, the defendant had performed none of these checks. The investigation found the defendant left her assigned post at 2:23 a.m. February 15, 2014 without waiting to be relieved by an incoming Correction Officer, as required. The Correction Officer who relieved the defendant immediately discovered inmate Jerome Murdough unresponsive in his cell at approximately 2:49 a.m. Murdough was pronounced dead a short time later.

LACKNER began employment with DOC as a Correction Officer in June 2006 and receives an annual base salary of approximately \$76,488. After the incident she was placed on modified duty removing her from contact with inmates. Upon her arrest today, she was suspended by DOC.

The investigation was conducted by DOI's Office of the Inspector General for the Department of Correction, particularly Assistant Inspector General Katherine Zdrojeski and Investigator Richard Askin, under the supervision of Inspector General Jennifer Sculco and Senior Associate Commissioner Michael Carroll.

Assistant District Attorney Ilya Kharkover of the Bronx County District Attorney's Office is handling the prosecution under the supervision of Deputy Chief of the District Attorney's Rackets Bureau James Goward.

The defendant has been indicted after DOI referred the matter to the Bronx County District Attorney.

An indictment is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country. The agency investigates and refers for prosecution City employees and contractors engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities or unethical conduct. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City.

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