

State of Connecticut
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL



Report Concerning the In-Custody Death of Kenneth Montaner-Buscampell
at the MacDougall-Walker Correctional Institution on December 12, 2024

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INTRODUCTION

On December 12, 2024, Kenneth Montaner-Buscampell¹ and Kyle McKinnon² were inmates at the MacDougall Correctional Institution, 1153 East Street South, Suffield, Connecticut assigned as cellmates at Cell 14 in the O Block of the corrections facility. At approximately 7:19 a.m. on December 12th, a video recorded McKinnon exiting Cell 14 carrying Montaner-Buscampell. Montaner-Buscampell appeared lifeless and another inmate alerted corrections officers and medical personnel who started chest compressions. At 8:00 a.m., paramedic staff on scene pronounced Montaner-Buscampell deceased.

Following an investigation by the Connecticut State Police Central District Major Crime Squad a Superior Court judge issued an arrest warrant for Kyle McKinnon charging him with the murder of Kenneth Montaner-Buscampell.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) has the statutory responsibility to investigate in-custody deaths to determine, inter alia, if the death was due to criminal action.³ In this case, that determination has already been made – at least to the standard of probable cause. Since the matter is now in court, there is no need to refer the matter to a state’s attorney and the OIG will defer to the court process to adjudicate Kyle McKinnon’s case.

ARREST WARRANT

The affidavit in support of the arrest application for Kyle McKinnon may be summarized as follows:

On December 12, 2024, at approximately 7:55 a.m., Connecticut State Troopers from Troop H – Hartford responded to the MacDougall Correctional Institution in Suffield on a report of a murder. Department of Correction (DOC) staff reported that an inmate, identified as Kyle McKinnon, strangled his cellmate Kenneth Montaner-Buscampell. DOC staff reported that McKinnon disposed of the victim’s body in the cell block common area before confessing to the murder.

¹ On December 12, 2024, Kenneth Montaner-Buscampell was a Hispanic male, age 26.

² On December 12, 2024, Kyle McKinnon was an African-American male, age 31.

³ General Statutes 51-277a(a)(2)(B) in pertinent part provides, “[W]henver a person dies in the custody of the Commissioner of Correction, the Inspector General shall investigate and determine whether the deceased person may have died as a result of criminal action, and, if so, refer such case to the Chief State’s Attorney or state’s attorney for potential prosecution.”

The DOC provided investigators with several video recordings that captured portions of the incident. A video from the Unit O Day Room showed that at 7:19:07 hours, McKinnon exited Cell 14 carrying Montaner-Buscampell. McKinnon tossed Montaner-Buscampell's body on a table and then returned to Cell 14. At 7:20:32 hours, that same video shows a person, believed to be McKinnon, throwing items from Cell 14 into the center of the cell block near a stairwell. The items were later identified as the victim's DOC-issued fan and hot plate.

The DOC also provided a video of their interview of McKinnon. In the video, McKinnon states, "I choked him out." McKinnon explained that "he physically carried him out" and "checked to see if he moved and he wasn't moving." DOC staff asked McKinnon if he choked the victim until he stopped breathing. McKinnon replied, "Yup."

On December 12, 2024, State Police detectives conducted an audio-recorded interview of Kyle McKinnon. Prior to any questioning, McKinnon was advised of his rights and signed a form acknowledging that he understood those rights. During the interview, McKinnon stated: "I strangled him and tried to kill him. That's all there is." He said it happened in the morning before getting up for breakfast. McKinnon stated that, "I had thoughts in my head; I don't really know what the hell is going on." He said he was being lied to and manipulated but could not elaborate how. After getting up to use the bathroom, he began to choke the victim while the victim was sleeping on the bottom bunk. McKinnon stated, "I feel bad enough as it is because honestly he was a good dude but I can tell when somebody's lying." When the doors opened for breakfast, he carried the victim out of the room and placed him on the table.

McKinnon explained that he told DOC staff not to place him in a cell with anyone, stating that he had been diagnosed with schizophrenia and depression.

The State Police detectives also interviewed inmates as to their observations. Witness 1 stated that, when the cell doors opened at 7:00 a.m., he saw a black male carrying a Hispanic male in his arms like a baby before tossing him onto a table. Witness 1 could tell that the inmate on the table was not okay and appeared to be deceased. Witness 2 also saw McKinnon carrying the victim before dropping him on a table.

Witness 3 was assigned to the cell next to McKinnon and Montaner-Buscampell. Witness 3 stated that on 12/11/24 at approximately 7:50 p.m., the victim approached a DOC Lieutenant and requested to be moved from his assigned cell.

On December 13, 2024, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner performed an autopsy on Kenneth Montaner-Buscampell. The autopsy findings were:

CAUSE OF DEATH: Neck Compression

MANNER OF DEATH: Homicide (Neck compression by other person while in prison custody)


On February 11, 2025, a Superior Court judge found probable cause to believe that Kyle McKinnon committed an offense and issued an arrest warrant for murder and strangulation in the first degree.

A copy of the arrest warrant is reprinted in the Appendix. McKinnon's criminal case is pending in the Hartford Judicial District under Docket No.: HHD-CR25-0769217-T.

CONCLUSION

The Connecticut State Police investigation has resulted in the arrest of Kyle McKinnon for the murder of Kenneth Montaner-Buscampell. The matter is now pending in the Hartford Judicial District under Docket No.: HHD-CR25-0769217-T. Given the pending case, is there no need for a referral to a state's attorney. The Office of Inspector General will take no further action in this matter.

Date: April 1, 2025


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