



**Commission of
Correction**

**Final Report of the
New York State Commission of Correction:**

In the Matter of the Death of

**Brett Abrams,
an incarcerated individual of the
Cattaraugus County Jail**

June 28, 2023

**To: Sheriff Timothy Whitcomb
Cattaraugus County Sheriff's Office
301 Court Street
Little Valley, New York 14755**

Allen Riley
Chairman

Yolanda Canty
Commissioner

GREETINGS:

WHEREAS, the Medical Review Board has reported to the NYS Commission of Correction pursuant to Correction Law, section 47(1)(d), regarding the death of Brett Abrams who died on February 1, 2022, as a result of circumstances which occurred while an incarcerated individual in the custody of the Cattaraugus County Sheriff at the Cattaraugus County Jail, the Commission has determined that the following final report be issued.

FINDINGS:

1. Brett Abrams was a 32-year-old male who died on 2/1/22 from an accidental multiple drug overdose that occurred on 1/31/22 while in the custody of the Cattaraugus County Sherriff at the Cattaraugus County Jail.
2. On 11/15/21, Abrams was admitted to the Cattaraugus County Jail [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
4. On 11/20/21, Abrams was noted to be [REDACTED] and was placed on increased supervision by Sgt. S.R. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. His cell was searched, and a BIC lighter was found.
5. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
6. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
7. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

8. [REDACTED]
9. [REDACTED]
10. [REDACTED]
11. [REDACTED]
12. [REDACTED]
13. On 12/4/21, security staff conducted a cell search on C-Pod due to contraband and smoking concerns. Abrams' cell was in the process of being searched when officers discovered torn up and burnt pieces of paper with phone numbers written on them. Abrams and another incarcerated individual became agitated that the numbers were being thrown away and the situation was escalated. The other individual tried entering the cell with the officers and refused orders to be handcuffed. OC spray was deployed by Sergeant (Sgt.) S.R and Abrams charged at him punching Sgt. S.R in the face. Abrams was taken to the floor and Correction Officer (CO) N.S applied a hypoglossal pressure. Abrams was then secured with handcuffs. [REDACTED]
14. [REDACTED]
15. [REDACTED]
16. [REDACTED]
17. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

18. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

19. On 1/31/22, CO C.H. entered the door to the B-line first floor and smelt a strong odor of smoke. CO C.H. heard another incarcerated individual indicate that Abrams was not responding to him, and the CO saw Abrams lying on the floor with his back to the cell gate. CO C.H. yelled to Abrams who was unresponsive, and a medical emergency was called. CO V.P. and RN [REDACTED] entered the cell [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

20. At 11:05 a.m., Randolph Ambulance arrived [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

ACTIONS REQUIRED:

TO THE CATTARAUGUS COUNTY JAIL PHYSICIAN:

The Jail Physician shall conduct a quality assurance review with nursing regarding COWS assessments to assure that vital signs are consistently taken and recorded.

A report of the findings and any corrective actions taken shall be forwarded to the Board upon completion.

WITNESS, HONORABLE ALLEN RILEY, Chairman, NYS Commission of Correction, Alfred E. Smith State Office Building, 80 South Swan Street, 12th Floor, in the City of Albany, New York 12210 on this 28th day of June, 2023.



Allen Riley
Chairman
Commission of Correction

AR: CO:jdb
2022-M-0014
June 2023