



**Commission of
Correction**

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

**In the Matter of the Special Investigation into the Care and Treatment
Provided to**

**Eric Ryals,
an incarcerated individual of the
Chautauqua County Jail**

March 26, 2025

**To: Sheriff James B. Quattrone
Chautauqua County Sheriff's Office
15 E. Chautauqua Street
P.O. Box 128
Mayville, New York 14757**

Allen Riley
Chairman

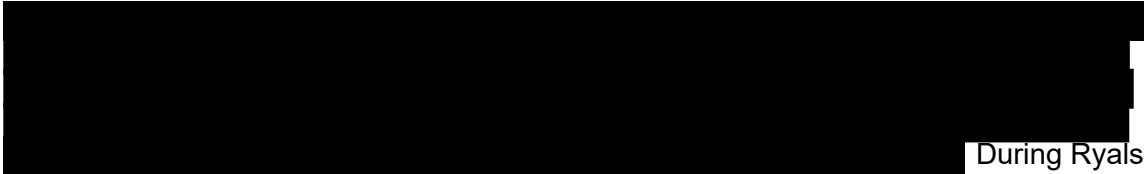


Yolanda Canty
Commissioner

Elizabeth Gaynes
Commissioner

GREETINGS:

WHEREAS, the Medical Review Board has reported to the NYS Commission of Correction pursuant to Correction Law, section 47(1)(e), regarding the care and treatment provided to Eric Ryals, which occurred while an incarcerated individual in the custody of the Chautauqua County Sheriff at the Chautauqua County Jail, the Commission has determined that the following final report be issued.

FINDINGS:

1. Eric Ryals is a 36-year-old male who was seriously injured on 7/11/24 during a suicide attempt that occurred while attempting to escape the custody of the Chautauqua County Sheriff's Office at the Chautauqua County Jail. Ryals attempted to escape custody by climbing a recreation yard fence and then jumping off the jail roof after being confronted by officers attempting to secure him. Ryals survived his injuries and was returned to custody after hospitalization. Ryals was admitted to the Chautauqua County Jail (CJ) on 6/21/24 after being arrested as a suspect in a robbery. During his arrest, Ryals stated that he was going to take his own life or attempt to be killed by lethal force from law enforcement.
2. Ryals is a single male with one child. Ryals received his high school diploma. Ryals reported that he was from Daleville, Alabama. There was no further demographical or social history available to the Commission on Ryals.
3.  During Ryals' incarceration at the Chautauqua CJ, on 7/11/24 at 12:28 p.m., Ryals attempted to escape the recreation yard by climbing the fence and going through the razor wire to get to the top of the Pod F building. Ryals was cornered on a building roof above the visitor entrance when he jumped off of the roof to the grass outside of the visiting entrance of the building. Ryals was charged with Escape 1st Degree. Adjudication on these charges is still pending.
4. .
5. .
6. On 6/21/24 at 11:30 p.m., Ryals was admitted to the Chautauqua CJ by Officer J.N. after being charged with Robbery 1st Degree, Criminal Possession of a Weapon 2nd Degree, Menacing 2nd Degree, Criminal Impersonation 2nd Degree, and Obstructing

Governmental Administration 2nd Degree. Ryals scored a "18" on the Suicide Screening for "yes" answers to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Ryals denied having any history of drug or alcohol abuse. [REDACTED]

7. [REDACTED]

8. [REDACTED]

9. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. A review of Ryals' mental health records by Commission staff found that when LMSW [REDACTED] completed the Mental Health Screening/Evaluation 14 Day questioner, LMSW [REDACTED] did not check the "yes" or the "no" box for Sexual abuse or Sexual offenses. Commission staff also found that LMSW [REDACTED] did not check the "yes" or "no" boxes for any of the questions on the Suicide Risk Screen. During an interview with Commission staff, LMSW [REDACTED] reported that she was completing the SAFE-T assessment and inadvertently did not answer the questions on the Suicide Risk Screen.

10. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Per the Chautauqua County Department of Health and Human Services Division of Correctional Health Policy and Procedure for Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT): Procedure: 1. Initial Intake Screening: b. *Any individual identified as having substance use disorder will be screened for withdrawal symptoms and placed on a withdrawal protocol as clinically indicated and ordered by the provider.* The Medical Review Board finds that although HSA [REDACTED] did initiate a CIWA after Ryals reported having a history of alcohol consumption, the facility medical provider was not notified for further withdrawal protocol or orders, and Ryals did not have any further CIWAs to monitor him for withdrawal symptoms.

11.

[REDACTED]

The Medical Review Board opines that although Ryals had an appropriate psychiatric assessment prior to removal from constant supervision, there was a lack of a defined treatment plan and suicide risk follow-up to monitor Ryals upon return to general population.

12.

[REDACTED]

The Medical Review Board finds that LPN [REDACTED] did practice out of the scope of an LPN. In New York State (NYS), an LPN can “read” a PPD test in millimeters of induration (collection of data), but an LPN cannot indicate that the reading is “positive” or “negative”.

13.

[REDACTED]

14.

[REDACTED]

15.

[REDACTED]

- 16. [REDACTED]
- 17. [REDACTED]
- 18. [REDACTED]
- 19. [REDACTED]
- 20. [REDACTED]
- 21. [REDACTED]
- 22. [REDACTED]

- 23. A review of the Unit NN logbook by Commission staff found that on 7/10/24, there were two entries specific to Ryals. At 10:52 a.m., Ryals went to mental health and at 1:00 p.m., Ryals returned to the unit.
- 24. A review of the Unit NN logbook by Commission staff found that on 7/11/24 at 6:55 a.m., Officer R.M. assumed the care of NN Block from Officer B. after a standing count of the block was completed and verified.
- 25. A review of the unit logbook by Commission staff found that on 7/11/24 from 6:55 a.m. through 9:00 a.m., supervisory visits were completed every 30-minutes with no specific

- logbook entries made for Ryals.
26. On 7/11/24 at 9:30 a.m., Officer R.M. documented in the unit logbook that a supervisory visit was completed and that Ryals was issued a razor.
 27. On 7/11/24 at 9:38 a.m., Sgt. M.M. documented in the unit logbook that a supervisory visit was completed. During an interview with Commission staff, Sgt. M.M. reported that he did not have any interaction with Ryals during the supervisory visit.
 28. On 7/11/24 at 10:01 a.m., Officer R.M. documented in the unit logbook that a supervisory visit was completed.
 29. On 7/11/24 at 10:34 a.m., Officer R.M. documented in the unit logbook that a supervisory visit was completed, and a razor was received from Ryals.
 30. On 7/11/24 at 11:01 a.m., Officer R.M. documented in the unit logbook that a supervisory visit was completed.
 31. On 7/11/24 at 11:12 a.m., Officer R.M. documented in the unit logbook that meal pass was completed on the unit.
 32. On 7/11/24 at 11:30 a.m., Officer R.M. documented in the unit logbook that a supervisory visit was completed, and that the meal cart was taken off of the unit.
 33. On 7/11/24 at 11:35 a.m., Officer R.M. documented in the unit logbook that Ryals went out to recreation. During an interview with Commission staff, Officer R.M. reported that he did a pat search on Ryals prior to him going out to the yard. Officer M.M. reported that he did not feel anything different on Ryals during the pat search.
 34. On 7/11/24 at 11:34 a.m., Officer D.R. documented in the recreation yard logbook receiving six incarcerated individuals from the 3rd floor into the recreation yard. Ryals was listed in the logbook along with five other incarcerated individuals.
 35. On 7/11/24 at 12:28 p.m., from a review of the video recording of the recreation (rec) yard by Commission staff, it was observed that Ryals was sitting on a bench with another incarcerated individual wearing his county issued jumpsuit. As two other incarcerated individuals began to walk past Ryals, Ryals stood up from the bench and began to follow behind the two incarcerated individuals. It was observed that Ryals had white socks on his feet and an orange crock placed on each of his hand. Ryals quickly placed his arms behind his back and followed the two incarcerated individuals around the front of the security hut to the side of the right side of the rec yard. Ryals then proceeded to veer off to the right corner of the rec yard and he began to climb the fence with a crock on each of his hands.
 36. On 7/11/24 at 12:28 p.m., Officer D.R. observed Ryals climbing the fence in the outside recreation area. Officer D.R. immediately radioed for assistance to the yard for an escape attempt. Ryals climbed the fence in the recreation yard and got through the razor wire and made his way to the top of the Pod 5 building. Security staff responded to the roof and observed Ryals laying under pipes. Staff ordered Ryals to get out from under the pipes and surrender, however, Ryals failed to comply to the order. Ryals then got up and ran towards the visiting side of the roof where he was contained in the corner of the

building above the visiting entrance. Ryals was commanded to give up and to lay down, to which Ryals failed to comply. Security staff then administered one, two second burst of Fox labs 1.4. chemical agent spray in the direction of Ryals' face. The spray made contact, however, Ryals then turned and jumped off of the building approximately 20 ft onto the grass outside of the visiting entrance. Ryals was quickly apprehended by security staff as he laid on the grass. Emergency Medical Services was immediately called to respond to the scene. Ryals had multiple razor wire cuts on his body, and he had complaints of back pain. Medical responded to the scene [REDACTED].

A review of Ryals' medical records by Commission staff found that medical failed to apply a cervical collar on Ryals who jumped approximately 20 feet from the roof of the building to ground.

37.

[REDACTED] he was transferred to the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Service (NYS DOCCS) at the Wende Correctional Facility(CF) Infirmary for medical monitoring and rehabilitation for his injuries.

38. On 7/11/24, after the incident, security staff searched Ryals' cell and found an envelope that was addressed to his father. Inside the envelope was a letter that was addressed to, "To whom it may concern". In summary, the note indicated that Ryals was tired of living his life inside of a cell and that if he died on his mission, his blood would be on their hands. Ryals signed the note and added; "Mr. Misunderstood 5-12-1988 – 7-11-2024".

39. A review by Commission staff of photographs that were taken of Ryals at the scene after he had jumped from off revealed that Ryals did not have his county issued jumpsuit on when he jumped from the roof. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. The Medical Review Board opines that pat searches performed by the officers must be conducted more thoroughly for all incarcerated individuals prior to going out and returning from recreation to identify potential contraband and/or escape paraphernalia.

ACTIONS REQUIRED:

TO THE OFFICE OF THE CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY SHERIFF:

The Sheriff shall conduct a review with staff of the policy and procedures for searches of incarcerated individuals before and after exercise periods and assure that staff are thoroughly conducting pat frisks for contraband.

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

In a response dated 1/29/25 to the Commission's preliminary report, Chautauqua CJ

administration indicated that the requested review was completed and included staff reinstruction and training. Corrective action will be verified by the Commission at a later scheduled facility evaluation

TO THE CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY JAIL PHYSICIAN

The Medical Director shall conduct a quality assurance review regarding the following:

1. Why on 6/24/24, HSA [REDACTED]. did not notify the facility provider that Ryals reported having a history of alcohol consumption per the facility MAT policy.
2. Why on 6/25/24, LPN [REDACTED]. read Ryals' PPD.
3. Why on 6/26/24, HSA [REDACTED]. cleared Ryals for general population without an RN reading Ryals' PPD for positive or negative results.
4. Why on 7/11/24, medical staff did not apply a cervical collar on Ryals.

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

In a response dated 1/29/25 to the Commission's preliminary report, Chautauqua CJ administration indicated that the requested reviews were completed. Corrective action will be verified by the Commission at a later scheduled facility evaluation.

TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE FAMILY SERVICES OF CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY

1. The Director shall conduct a quality assurance review with clinical staff regarding why on 6/24/24, LMSW [REDACTED]. did not complete the Mental Health Screening/Evaluation 14 Day questioner by checking the "yes" or the "no" box for Sexual abuse or Sexual offenses.
2. The Director shall conduct a quality assurance review with clinical staff regarding why on 6/24/24, LMSW [REDACTED]. did not check any of the "yes" or "no" boxes for any questions on the Suicide Risk Screen.
3. The Director shall conduct a quality assurance review regarding establishing mental health treatment plans for patients and implementing follow-up plans, with inclusion of security and health services staff input, for individuals removed from suicide watch.

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

In a response dated 1/29/25 to the Commission's preliminary report, Chautauqua CJ administration indicated that the requested reviews were completed. Corrective action will be verified by the Commission at a later scheduled facility evaluation.

WITNESS, HONORABLE YOLANDA CANTY, Commissioner, 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 26th day of March 2025.



Yolanda Canty
Commissioner
Commission of Correction

YC:BB:vc
2024-S-0005
March 26, 2025