

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY INMATE DEATHS

INTRODUCTION

The Grand Jury is mandated each year by the State of California to review the circumstances of any death that occurred while the inmate was incarcerated in the County Jail. In accordance with California State Penal Code, Section 919, the 2002-2003 Grand Jury investigated all inmate deaths during its term.

OBJECTIVE

To investigate the circumstances of a death which occurs while a person is incarcerated in the County Jail and determine if all jail procedures have been followed.

PROCEDURE

This year the Grand Jury reviewed three cases. Two deaths occurred while the detainees were incarcerated in the main jail; the third inmate died in a local hospital after being transferred from the main jail. The Jury reviewed the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department Major Crimes Reports, the Coroner's Reports, the Autopsy Reports in all three cases, and the Santa Barbara County Jail Medical Department's Policy and Procedure Manual. If needed, the Jury inspected areas of the County Jail relevant to the investigation and sought advice from experts in the medical field.

CONCLUSIONS

After reviewing the documentation for the three cases, the Jury felt that all deaths were from natural causes and no further investigation was necessary. The Jury found the Jail staff, Coroner's staff and the Sheriff to be very cooperative in furnishing all materials needed for the Jury's review.