KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL of TEXAS

CUSTODIAL DEATH REPORT

Agency Information

CDR Number:	25-1055-MJ	Version Type:	AMENDED
Report Date:	12/29/2025 1:03 PM	Status:	Submitted

Agency/Facility Information

Agency Name:	Harlingen Police Dept.	Agency Address:	1018 Fair Park Blvd
Agency City:	Harlingen	Agency State:	TX
Agency Zip:	78550		

Director Information

Director Salutation:	Chief	Director First Name:	Michael
Director Middle Name:			
Director Last Name:	Kester		
Reporter Name:	Jaime Palafox	Reporter Email:	jpalafox@harlingentx.gov

Decedent Information

Identity of Deceased

First Name: Dawn

Middle Name: Danielle

Last Name: Dressel

Suffix:

Date of Birth: 10/6/1979 Sex: Female

Race: Anglo or White

Age At Time Of Death: 46

Date/Time of Custody (arrest, incarceration) (mm/dd/yyyy hh:mm AM/PM):

Date/Time of Custody or Incident: 11/30/2025 10:23 PM

Date/Time of Death (mm/dd/yyyy hh:mm AM/PM):

Death Date and Time: 12/1/2025 3:02 AM

Manner / Cause of Death

Has a medical examiner or coroner conducted an evaluation to determine a cause of death?

Medical Examiner/Coroner Evaluation?: Yes, results are available

What was the manner of death? (select only one)

Manner of Death: Accidental

Medical Cause of Death:

Medical Cause of Death:

Acute cocaine toxity

Had the decedent been receiving treatment for the medical condition that caused the death after admission to your jail's jurisdiction?

Medical Treatment: Unknown

If death was an accident, homicide or suicide, who caused the death?

Who caused the death?: Not applicable

If a weapon caused the death, what type of weapon caused the death? (Hold CTRL to select all that apply)

Type of weapon that caused death?: Not Applicable

Was the cause of death the result of a pre-existing medical condition or did the decedent develop the condition after admission?

Pre existing medical condition?: Could not be determined

If death was an accident, homicide or suicide, what was the means of death?

Means of Death: Unknown

Location / Custody Information

Where did the event causing the death occur?

Street Address:	1018 Fairpark Blvd	City:	Harlingen
County:	Cameron	Zip:	78550

What location category best describes where the event causing the death occurred?

Location Category:	Law Enforcement Facility

What type of custody/facility was the Decedent in at the time of death:

Type of Custody:	Municipal Jail

Specific type of custody/facility:

Specific Type of Custody/Facility:
Jail - holding cell

What was the time and date of the deceased's entry into the law enforcement facility where the death occurred (mm/dd/yyyy hh:mm AM/PM):

Entry Date Time:	11/30/2025 11:47 PM

Where did the death occur?

Death Location:	Medical facility

General Information

Did any other law enforcement agencies respond to calls for service related to this incident?

Other Agencies Respond?:	Yes

What were the most serious offense(s) with which the deceased was (or would have been) charged with at the time of death?

Offense 1:

Aggravated Robbery

Offense 2:

Offense 3:

Were the Charges:: Filed

What were the types of charges or reason for contact? (Hold CTRL to select all that apply)

Type of Offense: Violent Crime Against Persons

At any time during the incident and/or entry into the law enforcement facility, did the decedent display or use a weapon?

Decedent display/use of weapons: No

At any time during the incident and/or entry into the law enforcement facility, did the decedent:

Attempt to Injure Others?: No

At any time during the incident and/or entry into the law enforcement facility, did the decedent:

Appear intoxicated (alcohol or drugs): Unknown

Make suicidal statements?: No

Exhibit any mental health problems?: Unknown

Exhibit any medical problems?: Yes

At any time during the incident and/or entry into the law enforcement facility, did the decedent:

Barricade self or initiate standoff?: No

Resist being handcuffed or arrested?: No

Physically attempt/assault officer(s):	No	Gain possession of officer's weapon:	No
Verbally threaten other(s) including law:	No	Escape or attempt to escape/flee custody:	No
Attempt gain possession officer's weapon:	No		

Was the deceased under restraint in the time leading up to the death or the events causing the death?

Under Restraint:	Yes, mark which restraint devices were used

Type of restraint

Type of Restraint:	Handcuffs

Summary of Incident

Summary of How the Death Occurred: (max. 30,000 characters)

Summary:

On 11/30/2025 at about 10:23 pm, Dawn Danielle Dressel (10/06/1979) was arrested by the San Benito Police Department for an outstanding Aggravated Robbery (1st degree Felony) warrant from the Harlingen Police Department. Harlingen Officer G. Ruiz # 4996 responded to 311 W. Robertson Street in San Benito, Texas and at approximately 10:48 pm he took custody of Ms. Dressel. San Benito Officer Rodriguez advised that Ms. Dressel was laying down on the back seat of the car and just started showing signs of difficulty breathing. Harlingen Officer G. Ruiz placed Ms. Dressel under arrest and drove her directly to Valley Baptist Medical center located 1725 N. Ed Carey drive for medical treatment. At approximately 11:39 pm, Ms. Dressel was discharged from the emergency room and was diagnosed with anxiety and a panic attack. She was referred to primary care physician for a follow up within the next 3-5 days. Ms. Dressel was medically cleared for incarceration.
On 11/30/2025 at 11:47 pm, Officer Ruiz and Ms. Dressel arrived at the Harlingen Police Department jail where she was booked for her pending warrant. Prior to walking Ms. Dressel to her cell, she was given the opportunity to make a phone call. While on the phone she underwent a what appeared to be a medical episode and was not responding to verbal commands. She was then placed on her side (recovery position) and EMS was summoned to assist her. EMS arrived at the Harlingen City jail where CPR was administered immediately, and she was then taken to Valley Baptist Medical Center emergency room for further medical treatment. During her medical evaluation, medical staff removed two glass pipes from inside her vagina. The glass pipes had burnt ends and white rocklike substances (believed to be crack cocaine) on ends of the pipes. On December 1, 2025, at 3:02 am, Ms. Dressel was pronounced deceased by emergency room doctors.