
Immigrant advocacy group calls for investigation of Adelanto detainee's death

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VICTORVILLE — A detainee at the Adelanto Detention Center died early Tuesday after he attempted to commit suicide last week, authorities said Wednesday, prompting calls for an independent investigation from an immigration advocacy group.

Osmar Epifanio Gonzalez-Gadba, 32, died early Tuesday at Victor Valley Global Medical Center, six days after he attempted to commit suicide. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials said. Gonzalez-Gadba was rushed to the hospital after he was found hanging inside his cell on March 22.

Gonzalez-Gadba is the fifth detainee to pass away in ICE custody in 2017, and the fourth death to occur at the Adelanto facility, according to Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC) Co-Executive Director Christina Fialho. The organization has called for an independent investigation into Gonzalez-Gadba's death.

"The Adelanto Detention Facility is known for its substandard medical care. Mr. Gonzalez-Gadba's death should be fully investigated to ensure that his death could not have been prevented," Fialho said. "Our hearts go out to the family and friends of Mr. Gonzalez-Gadba."

ICE officials said medical staff at Adelanto immediately called 911 and began efforts to resuscitate Gonzalez-Gadba, but he was placed on life support when he arrived at the hospital. Despite round-the-clock care, Gonzalez-Gadba never

regained consciousness, officials said, and died on Tuesday morning.

Since Gonzalez-Gadba's hospitalization last week, ICE has been endeavoring to locate his next of kin, but so far no family members have been identified, officials said.

Gonzalez-Gadba had been in ICE custody since Dec. 29 following his arrest by U.S. Border Patrol agents near Otay Mesa, San Diego. At the time of his death, ICE was seeking to obtain a travel document from the Nicaraguan government to facilitate his removal, officials said. Gonzalez-Gadba had been previously removed to Nicaragua in April 2016, according to Department of Homeland Security databases.

Consistent with the agency's protocols, the appropriate state health and local law enforcement agencies have been notified about the death, officials said, as have the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General and the ICE Office of Professional Responsibility. Additionally, ICE has advised Nicaraguan consular representatives.

"ICE is committed to ensuring the safety of all those in its custody," officials said. "As such, ICE Health Service Corps (IHSC) is conducting a thorough assessment of this incident."

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