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*****For Immediate Release*****

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Investigation into death of homicide suspect continues

PORT ORCHARD – An ongoing Kitsap Critical Incident Response Team (KCIRT) investigation into the death of a Kitsap County Jail inmate hospitalized after a physical altercation continues, pending a medical examiner's report.

Sean Michael Howell, 28 had been arrested by the Bremerton Police Department on Friday, May 8, 2020, and booked in Kitsap County Jail for First-Degree Murder. On Saturday, May 9, 2020, at around 10:30 a.m., Kitsap County Corrections Officers responded to an incident involving Howell, who was housed in a crisis cell attempting to tamper with the cell's sprinkler system.

Investigators learned four corrections officers initially entered Howell's cell and attempted to restrain him with the intention of moving him to a different cell. Howell began to violently resist as soon as the officers entered, leading to two additional corrections officers entering to assist.

Multiple other corrections officers responded, either witnessing or assisting by controlling limbs to avoid further injury to the officers or Howell as he was restrained. Additionally, four nurses responded to assist anyone who sustained injuries.

Investigators interviewed 17 corrections officers who were either involved or witnessed the incident, as well as four nurses and one inmate in an adjacent room.

Howell and one corrections officer were injured during the incident and were transported to the hospital. The corrections officer was treated and released. Howell died the morning of Friday, May 15, 2020. The incident remains under investigation and is being investigated by KCIRT, with the Washington State Patrol as the lead investigating agency.

Additional details regarding the incident will be released as the investigation continues. The Kitsap County Coroner's Office is investigating the cause of Howell's death. Any inquiries into the homicide case are to be directed to the Bremerton Police Department.

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