

[Home](#) >> [Our Office](#) >> [Media](#) >> Press Releases

## Additional Resources

### Release of Additional Findings on Death Investigation of Sarah Circle Bear at the Brown County Jail

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** : Thursday, September 03, 2015

**CONTACT:** Sara Rabern (605)773-3215

### Release of Additional Findings on Death Investigation of Sarah Circle Bear at the Brown County Jail

PIERRE, S.D – Attorney General Marty Jackley announced today that the Division of Criminal Investigation has concluded their investigation into the death of Sarah Circle Bear at the Brown County Jail.

On August 13, 2015, final autopsy results were released and confirmed that Circle Bear had died as a result of acute methamphetamine/amphetamine toxicity. Toxicology analysis of blood obtained at autopsy was positive for a toxic and lethal concentration of methamphetamine. The autopsy further showed no further evidence of injury which would have caused or contributed to her death.

Circle Bear was booked in the Brown County Jail on July 3, 2015 at approximately 11:00 p.m. She spent time in both a holding cell and a jail cell throughout the early morning hours of July 4th, which included a mental health evaluation from a mental health professional and was cleared to remain in the custody of the jail. After the evaluation, Circle Bear was taken to the cell block where she remained until approximately 8:18 a.m. on July 5, when a cellmate called for medical attention for Circle Bear. She was removed from cell block and taken to a holding cell where she was more closely monitored by jail staff for the next two hours, including checking her vital signs and consulted medical staff via telephone. At 10:37 a.m. Circle Bear was then found unresponsive and EMT services were called immediately. Jail staff began to administer CPR until EMT services arrived at 10:41 a.m. Circle Bear was then transported to local hospital where she later died.

On three separate occasions Circle Bear was asked if she had taken or was under the influence of any illegal drugs, including the time of her arrest, booking into Brown County Jail and during the mental health evaluation and each time she denied.

After the review of jail surveillance video and numerous interviews, investigators found no evidence to indicate Circle Bear obtained methamphetamine while in custody at the Brown County Jail and the totality of evidence demonstrates she brought the controlled substance into the Brown County Jail in a way that was not detectable from regular and acceptable jail procedures. The investigation results were found to be consistent with the forensic autopsy findings. The source of the methamphetamine is part of the criminal investigation associated

with the initial traffic stop in Roberts County and may be further disclosed through normal course of those proceedings.

-30-

---

---

[Contact Us](#) | [Site Disclaimer](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [State of South Dakota Home Page](#)

[Conference of Western Attorneys General](#) | [National Association of Attorneys General](#)