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Death at Minnesota Correctional Facility-Rush City Being Investigated as Possible Homicide

St. Paul, Minn. – The Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, the Chisago County Sheriff’s Office, and the DOC’s Office of Special Investigations are investigating the death of a 56-year-old man at the Minnesota Correctional Facility (MCF)-Rush City. The death is being investigated as a possible homicide.

While corrections officers were doing regular rounds at 11:30 p.m. last night, they found James Francis Howard with injuries to his face and head in his cell. When DOC staff entered the cell, they took Howard’s cellmate into custody, and initiated life saving measures until paramedics arrived. Mr. Howard was pronounced dead at 12:20 a.m.

Mr. Howard was serving a sentence for homicide that began on 09/17/2012 with a release date of 05/11/2034. The cellmate, age 29, was serving two sentences for assault that began 05/08/2020 with a release date of 05/17/2021.

The two men were cellmates within a temporary housing unit, which means they are not actively engaged in employment or programming.

No additional information will be available until the investigation is complete.

The last time an incarcerated person died following an altercation with another incarcerated person was in 2013 at the MCF-Oak Park Heights.

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