



DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

ADMINISTRATION

3200 East Highway 34
c/o 500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501-5070
Phone: (605) 773-3478
Fax: (605) 773-3194

Website: <http://doc.sd.gov/>

Follow us on Twitter: @SouthDakotaDOC

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Michael Winder, SD DOC Communications & Information Manager

State Prison Inmate Dies Following Apparent Medical-Related Fall

(Sioux Falls, S.D.)- A state prison inmate has died following an apparent medical-related fall at the Jameson Annex of the South Dakota State Penitentiary last weekend.

Inmate Michael Vaisa fell in a housing unit in the Jameson Annex just before 2 p.m. Sept. 21. The inmate was transported by ambulance to a local hospital for treatment of head and neck injuries. He was placed on life support at the hospital before passing away Sept. 25.

Based on witness statements, it appears Vaisa fell from the second floor of the housing unit to the first floor because of a medical condition. The Division of Criminal Investigation is investigating the incident.

Vaisa, age 45, was serving a life sentence for first-degree murder and first-degree burglary out of New Mexico under an interstate compact agreement. There are currently 27 South Dakota inmates being housed in other states and 28 inmates from other states being housed in South Dakota as part of the compact.

An autopsy will be conducted.

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Our mission is to protect the citizens of South Dakota by providing safe and secure facilities for juvenile and adult offenders committed to our custody by the courts. To provide effective community supervision to offenders upon their release and to utilize evidence-based practices to maximize opportunities for rehabilitation.