

ATLANTIC COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

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NEWS RELEASE

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MAYS LANDING – An Atlantic County Grand Jury determined that the death of an Egg Harbor City man while he was in police custody was accidental, Atlantic County Prosecutor Ted Housel announced Friday.

The Grand Jury panel, which heard the case involving the death of 31-year-old Charles Arroyo, found police made a lawful arrest. They further found that none of the police officers used excessive force. The panel met on May 28 and June 4, First Assistant Prosecutor Murray Talasnik, who presented the case to the Grand Jury, stated.

On Oct. 18 at 10:55 p.m. Egg Harbor City Police received a 911 call from Betsy Arroyo who expressed concerns over the well being of her brother Charles Arroyo and her mother Isabel Arroyo, of the 400 block of Havana Avenue in Egg Harbor City.

Egg Harbor City Police responded to the Havana Avenue residence and found Charles Arroyo pinning his mother on her bed. He was holding her wrists and his legs were wrapped around her legs, Talasnik stated.

Charles Arroyo, of Buffalo Avenue in Egg Harbor City, refused to let go of his mother, despite his sister and police officers asking that he do so. He began choking Isabel Arroyo. Four police officers attempted to pull Arroyo off of his mother. He resisted. One officer unsuccessfully used pepper spray to stop Arroyo's violent acts. During the struggle Arroyo kicked Egg Harbor City Police Officer David Aldridge in the head. The officer had to be hospitalized for several days.

During the struggle with police Arroyo attempted to take an officer's gun. That officer, Patrolman Dylan Hutton, struck Arroyo in the face to prevent Arroyo from taking his gun. After gaining control of Arroyo and placing him in handcuffs, police were then able to bring him to the front of the house to await an ambulance to take him for psychiatric care. After being put in the ambulance Arroyo suffered a seizure and stopped breathing. Emergency workers tried to resuscitate him both in route and in the hospital but without success. Arroyo was pronounced dead at 11:34 p.m. at the AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center, Mainland Campus, in Galloway Township, Talasnik stated.

Atlantic County Medical Examiner Dr. Hydow Park performed an autopsy and determined Arroyo suffered minor abrasions on his face and wrist but they were not life threatening injuries. Arroyo died from sudden cardiac arrest associated with an acute excited state. This cause of death is also known as excited delirium, which resulted from Arroyo's underlying Schizophrenia, combined with continued violent resistance to the police officers efforts to place Arroyo under arrest, Talasnik said.

The Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office Major Crimes Unit, under the supervision of Lt. Michael Corrado, conducted the investigation.

Anyone with information involving serious crimes is asked to call the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office at 609-909-7800 or go to the Prosecutor's Office Web site at <http://www.acpo.org/tips.html> and provide information by filling out the form anonymously on the Submit a Tip page. People can also call Crime Stoppers at 609-652-1234 or 1-800-658-8477 (TIPS). Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards for information leading to the arrest and indictment of those who commit crimes in Atlantic County.