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## Inmate found dead in cell at Lake County Jail

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By **Andy Grimm** Post-Tribune staff writer

CROWN POINT— A 19-year-old man imprisoned on robbery charges hanged himself Sunday in his cell at the Lake County Jail.

A jail guard found Eliud Flores of Merrillville hanging by a twisted sheet from the sprinkler head in his single cell around 1:10 a.m., Lake County Sheriff's Department spokesman Mike Higgins said.

A suicide note was found in the cell. Flores was taken to Methodist Hospitals in Merrillville, where he died.

The suicide is the sixth in three years at the jail, double the number of suicides at the Cook County Jail, a lock-up with a daily population 10 times larger than the one in Crown Point.

Some 20 minutes earlier, another guard had passed Flores' cell while making rounds and said the inmate was awake and seemed in good spirits.

Higgins said Flores was not on suicide watch, meaning jail officials had not identified him as a risk to harm himself. Jail mental health services perform those evaluations.

"There was no reason to believe this guy was suicidal," Higgins said.

The contract for current mental health services provider Correct Care Solutions expired at midnight Monday, when Gary-based Edgewater Systems for Balanced Living took over.

Fraud suspect Adekunle Adumabo took his own life nearly a year ago after he announced in federal court, repeatedly, that he would kill himself and Judge Paul Cherry ordered U.S. Marshals to advise the jail Adumabo was a suicide risk.

Nine months earlier, 21-year-old Joseph Lehman hanged himself, prompting Sheriff Roy Dominguez to invite the National Institute of Corrections to review the jail's processes for evaluating and monitoring potentially suicidal inmates. The effort resulted in a 20-page report on jail practices and how they could be improved. Officials with the mental health services provider at the time, Southlake Center, said they were never given a copy.

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