

William Styffe, 33, Suspected Bank Robber, Is Dead 7 Weeks After Suicide Attempt in Jail

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Bill Styffe in a picture from his Facebook page.

William Carl Styffe, who was accused of trying to rob [Hancock Bank in Palm Coast](#) and robbing a Sun Trust Bank in Ormond Beach on Aug. 30, then [a Compass Bank in St. Johns County](#) a few days later, died over the weekend subsequent to injuries he sustained during a suicide attempt at the Volusia County Branch Jail on Sept. 18.

He attempted suicide even though he was on suicide watch, and was supposed to be checked on every 15 minutes. He did so with towels, even though inmates on suicide watch at the Volusia jail are not supposed to have towels, according to a Volusia County Sheriff's report.

Styffe had been under hospice care when he died. The State Attorney's office and a spokesman for Volusia County government, which oversees the county jail there, confirmed that he died over the weekend, but would not release the day of his death or the location. Styffe was under court supervision through the 7th Judicial District's pre-trial services.

Styffe, a resident of Coconut Creek who had turned 33 on Sept. 21, had been [apprehended by U.S. Marshals](#) in Palm Beach County on September 9. He was briefly held at the Palm Beach County jail and attempted suicide there the morning of Sept. 14, according to the sheriff's report. He was scheduled to be transported to the Volusia jail on Sept. 16. Instead, he was transferred there the same day he attempted suicide, on the 14th.

Styffe was placed in Cell Block 2A, a medical block for inmates on suicide watch. A guard was conducting a walk-through of the block at 7:08 p.m. on Sept. 18 when, according to the sheriff's report, "he did not see Styffe immediately so he opened [the] hatch for food trays and saw Styffe laying on the ground." The guard saw a towel wrapped around Styffe's neck, the other end of the towel being "wedged into the cell door." The guard said that Styffe had two towels "tied together and he was attempting to hang himself by putting the towel in the door and laying on the ground," the report state.

A paramedics conducted CPR on Styffe until EVAC personnel arrived at the scene. Until then, Styffe was not breathing, according to the report, suggesting that Styffe had been non-responsive for a long period of time: the sheriff's report does not include an actual timeline. Styffe began breathing when EVAC personnel attended to him, the report states. He was then evacuated to Halifax hospital.

He never recovered, Dave Byron, a spokesman for Volusia County government, said. "This was one of those situations where he was in really bad shape," Byron said, stressing that he did not die from the suicide attempt since, according to Byron, the attempt at the jail was "not successful." By Byron acknowledged: "I don't believe he ever recovered."

County officials may be at pains to stress that the suicide attempt was not the cause of death for liability reasons: that Styffe at least successfully attempted to take his life—and became unresponsive at least for a period of time—even though he was on suicide watch may raise questions about the jail's suicide watch system.

Styffe's original bond had been set at \$300,000. The attempted robbery charge in Flagler County was dropped on Oct 25, according to a spokesperson for the State Attorney's office. That day, in St. Johns, Styffe was released on his own recognizance to pre-trial services in an order that nullified the bond, and required pre-trial services to "notify the state in the event that [Styffe] is released from any hospital, rehabilitation center or any other care center." If he had recovered enough to be discharged, he would have been placed under house arrest with electronic monitoring, according to the court order signed by Judge J. Michael Traynor.

He never recovered.



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