Kansas Bureau of Investigation

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Homicide and use of force investigations in Great Bend

BARTON & STAFFORD COUNTIES – The Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI) is investigating after a homicide, police pursuit, and apparent suicide took place in Barton and Stafford counties.

The Barton County Sheriff's Office requested the KBI investigate on Friday, Dec. 27, around 10 a.m. KBI agents and the Crime Scene Response Team responded.

On Friday, at approximately 9:10 a.m., officers with the Great Bend Police Department were dispatched to 1516 7th St., in Great Bend on a disturbance call.

When officers arrived they learned from witnesses that Mario Martinez-Garcia, 32, entered the workplace of Esmeralda Torres-Lopez, 32, forcing her outside where he then shot her. EMS arrived on scene and transported Torres-Lopez to a local hospital. She sustained fatal injuries and was pronounced dead at 9:55 a.m.

Preliminary information indicates that Martinez-Garcia fled the scene in a white 2021 Chevy Silverado. Nearby detectives from the Great Bend Police Department spotted the truck speeding away, and a vehicle pursuit ensued. Law enforcement from several additional agencies joined the pursuit. Law enforcement officers deployed a tire deflation device. Then a deputy from the Barton County Sheriff's Office conducted a tactical vehicle intervention causing the pickup truck to leave the roadway and hit a barbed-wire fence. The truck came to rest in a field near mile marker 191 on Highway 50 in Stafford County. Officers carefully approached the truck to gain sight of the driver. Martinez-Garcia was found deceased inside the truck. He had a gunshot wound to his head, and was holding a handgun. The coroner pronounced him dead on scene at 9:45 a.m.

No law enforcement officers were injured during the incident. Autopsies will be conducted.

The KBI will conduct a thorough investigation into these incidents. Once completed, findings will be presented to the Stafford County Attorney for review. The investigation is ongoing.

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