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Criminal probe in man's death

BY ROBERT E. KESSLER
STAFF WRITER

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The Justice Department has opened a criminal investigation into possible civil rights violations in the death of a man with a history of schizophrenia after a struggle with Southampton police last year.

David Glowczenski, 35, was hit numerous times with electric charges from a Taser gun as Southampton police tried to restrain him after his family had complained that he was acting bizarrely.



As part of the investigation, FBI agents in recent weeks have subpoenaed records relating to the Glowczenski case from the Southampton Police Department, the Southampton Village Volunteer Ambulance Service, and the Suffolk County medical examiner, district attorney's office and Police Department.

James Margolin, an FBI spokesman in New York, said yesterday that the bureau is investigating the circumstances of Glowczenski's death. He declined to comment further, as did Sanford Cohen, the assistant U.S. attorney heading the investigation, and Robert Nardoza, a spokesman for the U. S. attorney.

Glowczenski's family has filed a civil suit in federal court in Central Islip against a number of Suffolk agencies and the Taser company, claiming that the death was a result of negligence or a cover-up of the circumstances.

The county medical examiner termed the death natural, and due to "acute exhaustive mania due to schizophrenia."

Fred Brewington, the attorney for Glowczenski's family, said yesterday, "We welcome a full and fair investigation into what we believe is a criminal action by the Village of Southampton Police."

Brewington has said the medical examiner's explanation of the cause of death defies logic. Brewington said Glowczenski was hit nine times with a Taser stun gun and with pepper spray, and he was beaten so badly that his ribs were fractured and his testicles ruptured.

Brewington said yesterday that because of the criminal investigation, the judge in the civil suit has barred him temporarily from questioning the five organizations subpoenaed by the FBI.