

Report Identification Number: NY-15-013 Prepared by: New York City Regional Office

Issue Date: 7/31/2015

This	s report, prepared pursuant to section 20(5) of the Social Services Law (SSL), concerns:
X	A report made to the New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) involving the death of a child.
	The death of a child for whom child protective services has an open case.
	The death of a child whose care and custody or custody and guardianship has been transferred to an authorized agency.
	The death of a child for whom the local department of social services has an open preventive service case.

The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) is mandated by section 20 of the SSL to investigate or cause for the investigation of the cause and circumstances surrounding the death, review such investigation, and prepare and issue a fatality report in regard to the categories of deaths noted above involving a child, except where a local or regional fatality review team issues a report, as authorized by law.

Such report must include: the cause of death; the identification of child protective or other services provided or actions taken regard to such child and child's family; any extraordinary or pertinent information concerning the circumstances of the child's death; whether the child or the child's family received assistance, care or services from the social services district prior to the child's death; any action or further investigation undertaken by OCFS or the social services district since the child's death; and as appropriate, recommendations for local or state administrative or policy changes.

This report contains no information that would identify the deceased child, his or her siblings, the parent, parents, or other persons legally responsible for the child, and any members of the deceased child's household.

By statute, this report will be forwarded to the social services district, chief county executive officer, chairperson of the local legislative body of the county where the child died and the social services district that had legal custody of the child, if different. Notice of the issuance of this report will be sent to the Speaker of the Assembly and the Temporary President of the State of New York.

This report may <u>only</u> be disclosed to the public by OCFS pursuant to section 20(5) of the SSL. It may be released by OCFS only after OCFS has determined that such disclosure is not contrary to the best interests of the deceased child's siblings or other children in the household.

OCFS' review included an examination of actions taken by individual caseworkers and supervisors within the social services district and agencies under contract with the social services district. The observations and recommendations contained in this report reflect OCFS' assessment and the performance of these agencies.

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Abbreviations

Relationships					
BM-Biological Mother	SM-Subject Mother	SC-Subject Child			
BF-Biological Father	SF-Subject Father	OC-Other Child			
MGM-Maternal Grand Mother	MGF-Maternal Grand Father	FF-Foster Father			
PGM-Paternal Grand Mother	PGF-Paternal Grand Father	DCP-Day Care Provider			
MGGM-Maternal Great Grand Mother	MGGF-Maternal Great Grand Father	PGGF-Paternal Great Grand Father			
PGGM-Paternal Great Grand Mother	MA/MU-Maternal Aunt/Maternal Uncle	PA/PU-Paternal Aunt/Paternal Uncle			
	Contacts				
LE-Law Enforcement	CW-Case Worker	CP-Case Planner			
DrDoctor	ME-Medical Examiner	EMS-Emergency Medical Services			
DC-Day Care	FD-Fire Department	BM-Biological Mother			
CPR-Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation					
	Allegations				
FX-Fractures	II-Internal Injuries	L/B/W-Lacerations/Bruises/Welts			
S/D/S-Swelling/Dislocation/Sprains	C/T/S-Choking/Twisting/Shaking	B/S-Burns/Scalding			
P/Nx-Poisoning/ Noxious Substance	XCP-Excessive Corporal Punishment	PD/AM-Parent's Drug Alcohol Misuse			
CD/A-Child's Drug/Alcohol Use	MN-Medical Neglect	EdN-Educational Neglect			
EN-Emotional Neglect	SA-Sexual Abuse	M/FTTH-Malnutrition/Failure-to-thrive			
IF/C/S-Inadequate Food/ Clothing/ Shelter	IG-Inadequate Guardianship	LS-Lack of Supervision			
Ab-Abandonment	OTH/COI-Others				
	Miscellaneous				
IND-Indicated	UNF-Unfounded	SO-Sexual Offender			
Sub-Substantiated	Unsub-Unsubstantiated	DV-Domestic Violence			
LDSS-Local Department of Social	ACS-Administration for Children's	NYPD-New York City Police			
Service	Services	Department			
PPRS-Purchased Preventive					
Rehabilitative Services					

Case Information

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Report Type: Child Deceased **Jurisdiction:** Kings **Date of Death:** 01/31/2015

Age: 5 day(s) Gender: Male Initial Date OCFS Notified: 02/04/2015

Presenting Information

The SCR registered a report on 2/4/15. It was alleged that on 1/31/15, the mother placed the five-day-old child to sleep with her on the bed. When the mother awoke, she found the child unresponsive with black vomit around his mouth. The father was present, but the report had no details about his actions. The report noted that the child was a healthy child and this made the cause of death suspicious. The role of the child's siblings were unknown.

Executive Summary

The SC was five days old when she died. The family opposed an autopsy for religious reasons. The ME conducted an external examination of the body and ruled the cause and manner of death as undetermined.

On 2/4/15, the SCR registered a report concerning the death of the SC. The allegations of the report were DOA/Fatality and Inadequate Guardianship of the SC by the parents.

Due to the family's traditions, after the SC's discharge from the hospital, the parents remained at the MGP's home for support. The four siblings were with other relatives to give the parents time to bond with the newborn. The siblings were seen and deemed safe in the care of the relatives.

The parents both slept in the MGP's guest room. The BM slept on a twin size bed that was pushed against the wall to the left side of the bedroom, parallel to the father's bed. There was a bassinet between the two beds.

On 1/31/15, the BM last fed the SC at 12:30 A.M. The BM then placed the SC to sleep with her on the bed. The SC's back was facing the wall. The BM was laying next to the SC, facing him, with her back towards the other bed. The parents were awakened by the BF's alarm clock at approximately 3:40 A.M. The BM touched the tip of the SC's nose and it was cold, she then touched his hand and realized that he was unresponsive. The BM began screaming and crying. The BF responded by taking the SC to the living room; and then realized that the SC was unresponsive. The BF called a private ambulance company who responded to the home and they contacted the NYPD. Upon arrival, the EMS technicians found the SC in full rigor mortis on the couch. At 3:50 A.M., while in the home, the EMS technicians pronounced the SC dead. ACS did not ascertain the position of the SC when the mother found him unresponsive. The NYPD contacted the ME's office, and an investigator responded to the scene. Neither the NYPD nor the ME investigator found any signs of trauma on the SC's body.

Due to religious reasons, the family was allowed to take the SC's body to the temple. EMS transported the SC's body to the temple on 1/31/15, and then on 2/1/15 to ME's office for the examination. The SC was buried on the same day.

On 4/14/15, ACS substantiated the allegations of the report against the parents citing that the two received safe sleep education. However, they placed the SC at risk of serious harm by having the BM co-sleep with him.

Findings Related to the CPS Investigation of the Fatality

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Safety Assessment:

 Was sufficient information gathered to make the decision recorded on the:

Approved Initial Safety Assessment?

Safety assessment due at the time of determination?

• Was the safety decision on the approved Initial Safety Assessment appropriate?

Yes

Yes

No

Determination:

 Was sufficient information gathered to make determination(s) for all allegations as well as any others identified in the course of the investigation?

Was the determination made by the district to unfound or indicate appropriate?

Yes, sufficient information was gathered to determine all allegations.

Yes

Explain:

No additional information.

Was the decision to close the case appropriate?

Was casework activity commensurate with appropriate and relevant statutory

or regulatory requirements?

Was there sufficient documentation of supervisory consultation?

Yes Yes

Yes, the case record has detail of

the consultation.

Explain:

N/A

Required Actions Related to the Fatality

Are there Required Actions related to the compliance issue(s)? \boxtimes Yes \square No

_	m: 1/11
Issue:	Timely/Adequate Seven Day Assessment
Summary:	The Safety Assessment (SA) was completed timely, but was not adequate. ACS documented in the progress notes that the surviving siblings were safe; however, on the SA form, the information focused on the SC and not on the surviving siblings.
Legal Reference:	SSL 424(3);18 NYCRR432.2(b)(3)(ii)(c)
Action:	ACS must meet with the staff involved in this fatality investigation and inform NYCRO of the date of the meeting, who attended, and what was discussed; and submit a correction action plan within 45 days that identifies what action it has taken or will take to address this issue.
Issue:	Timely/Adequate 24 Hour Assessment
Summary:	The assessment was completed timely, but the information documented on the Safety Assessment form focused on the deceased child as opposed to the surviving siblings.
Legal Reference:	SSL 424(6);18 NYCRR 432.2(b)(3)(i)
Action:	ACS must meet with the staff involved in this fatality investigation and inform NYCRO of the date of the meeting, who attended, and what was discussed; and submit a correction action plan within 45

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	days that identifies what action it has taken or will take to address this issue.
Issue:	Failure to provide notice of report
Summary:	There was no NOE issued for the mother or the MGM. The incident occurred in the MGM's home.
Legal Reference:	18 NYCRR 432.2(b)(3)(ii)(f)
Action:	ACS must meet with the staff involved in this fatality investigation and inform NYCRO of the date of the meeting, who attended, and what was discussed; and submit a correction action plan within 45 days that identifies what action it has taken or will take to address this issue.

Fatality-Related Information and Investigative Activities

	Incident In	formation
Date of Death: 01/31/2015	,	Fime of Death: 03:45 AM
Time of fatal incident, if differe	nt than time of death: Unk	nown
County where fatality incident of	occurred:	KINGS
Was 911 or local emergency nur	mber called?	No
Did EMS to respond to the scen	e?	Yes
At time of incident leading to de	eath, had child used alcoho	l or drugs? N/A
Child's activity at time of incide	ent:	
⊠ Sleeping	☐ Working	☐ Driving / Vehicle occupan
☐ Playing	☐ Eating	□ Unknown
☐ Other		
Did child have supervision at ti	me of incident leading to do	eath? Yes
How long before incident was th	•	
Is the caretaker listed in the Ho	usehold Composition? Yes	- Caregiver
At time of incident supervisor w	vas:	
☐ Drug Impaired	☐ Absent	
☐ Alcohol Impaired	⊠ Asleep	
☐ Distracted	☐ Impaired by i	llness
☐ Impaired by disability	☐ Other:	
Total number of deaths at incid	ent event:	
Children ages 0-18: 1		

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Household Composition at time of Fatality



Household	Relationship	Role	Gender	Age
Deceased Child's Household	Deceased Child	Alleged Victim	Male	5 Day(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Father	Alleged Perpetrator	Male	25 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Mother	Alleged Perpetrator	Female	29 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Female	6 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Male	5 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Female	3 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Male	17 Month(s)
Other Household 1	Aunt/Uncle	No Role	Female	22 Year(s)
Other Household 1	Grandparent	No Role	Female	63 Year(s)
Other Household 1	Grandparent	No Role	Male	66 Year(s)

LDSS Response

Following the receipt of the 2/4/15 report, ACS learned that after the SC's discharge from the hospital, the parents stayed at the MGP's home for support.

On 1/31/15, the mother last fed the SC at 12:30 A.M., and then placed him to sleep with her on the bed. The mother slept on a twin size bed that was pushed against the wall to the left side of the bedroom, parallel to the father's bed. The SC's back was against the wall, the mother was facing the SC with her back towards the father's bed.

The parents were awakened by the father's alarm clock at approximately 3:40 A.M. The mother touched the tip of the SC's nose and it was cold; she then touched the SC's hand and realized that he was unresponsive. The mother began screaming and crying.

The investigation revealed that the father responded to the mother's screams and took the SC to the living room; he then realized that the SC was unresponsive. The father contacted the NYPD and called a private ambulance company which responded to the home. The EMS technicians pronounced the SC dead at 3:50 A.M. The NYPD contacted the ME's office, and an investigator responded to the scene. Neither the NYPD nor the ME found any signs of trauma on the SC's body. The accounts provided by the parents regarding the events that transpired during the night were consistent.

The mother demonstrated for the Specialist that there was some space in between herself and the SC. The Specialist documented that the mother weighed one-hundred and thirty five pounds, and the SC weighed eight pounds and three ounces. The documentation reflected there were pillows and blankets on the bed. The parents denied alcohol use on the night of the incident.

Due to the family's traditions, the four siblings were with other relatives. ACS made several visits to different relatives' homes to see the siblings. ACS also visited the parents' home and deemed it safe for the children. Collateral contacts with family members, neighbors, school staff, and pediatrician noted that there were no concerns regarding the parents' ability to care for the siblings. ACS offered the family services; however, the parents declined and noted that they had sought services in their community.

On 4/14/15, ACS substantiated the allegations of the report against the parents citing that the parents received safe sleep

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education. However, they placed the SC at risk of serious harm by having the mother co-sleep on the twin-sized bed with him.

Official Manner and Cause of Death

Official Manner: Undetermined

Primary Cause of Death: Undetermined if injury or medical cause

Person Declaring Official Manner and Cause of Death: Medical Examiner

Multidisciplinary Investigation/Review

Was the fatality investigation conducted by a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)?No

Comments: The investigation adhered to previously approved protocols for joint investigation.

Was the fatality reviewed by an OCFS approved Child Fatality Review Team? No

Comments: There is no OCFS approved Child Fatality Review Team in the NYC Region.

SCR Fatality Report Summary

Alleged Victim(s)	Alleged Perpetrator(s)	Allegation(s)	Allegation Outcome
017164 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Days	017165 - Mother, Female, 29 Year(s)	DOA / Fatality	Substantiated
017164 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Days	017165 - Mother, Female, 29 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Substantiated
017164 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Days	017166 - Father, Male, 25 Year(s)	DOA / Fatality	Substantiated
017164 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Days	017166 - Father, Male, 25 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Substantiated

CPS Fatality Casework/Investigative Activities

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
All children observed?	\boxtimes			
When appropriate, children were interviewed?	\boxtimes			
Alleged subject(s) interviewed face-to-face?	\boxtimes			
All 'other persons named' interviewed face-to-face?			X	
Contact with source?	\boxtimes			
All appropriate Collaterals contacted?	\boxtimes			

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Was a death-scene investigation performed?	×				
Was there discussion with all parties (youth, other household members, and staff) who were present that day (if nonverbal, observation and comments in case notes)?	X				
Coordination of investigation with law enforcement?	×				
Did the investigation adhere to established protocols for a joint investigation?	X				
Was there timely entry of progress notes and other required documentation?	X				
Additional information: The children were not interviewed about the SC's death as they were not present at the time of the incident.					

Fatality Safety Assessment Activities

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Were there any surviving siblings or other children in the household?	×			
Was there an adequate safety assessment of impending or immediate d in the household named in the report:	langer to su	ırviving sib	lings/other	children
Within 24 hours?	\boxtimes			
At 7 days?	\boxtimes			
At 30 days?	\boxtimes			
Was there an approved Initial Safety Assessment for all surviving siblings/ other children in the household within 24 hours?	\boxtimes			
Are there any safety issues that need to be referred back to the local district?		X		
When safety factors were present that placed the surviving siblings/other children in the household in impending or immediate danger of serious harm, were the safety interventions, including parent/caretaker actions adequate?			×	

Fatality Risk Assessment / Risk Assessment Profile

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Was the risk assessment/RAP adequate in this case?	\boxtimes			
During the course of the investigation, was sufficient information gathered to assess risk to all surviving siblings/other children in the	X			

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household?			
Was there an adequate assessment of the family's need for services?	×		
Did the protective factors in this case require the LDSS to file a petition in Family Court at any time during or after the investigation?		X	
Were appropriate/needed services offered in this case	X		

Placement Activities in Response to the Fatality Investigation

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Did the safety factors in the case show the need for the surviving siblings/other children in the household be removed and placed in foster care at any time during this fatality investigation?		X		
Were there surviving siblings/other children in the household removed as a result of this fatality report/investigation?		×		

Legal Activity Related to the Fatality

Was there legal activity as a result of the fatality investigation? There was no legal activity

Services Provided to the Family in Response to the Fatality

Services	Provided After Death	Offered, but Refused	Offered, Unknown if Used	Needed but not Offered	Needed but Unavaliable	N/A	CDR Lead to Referral
Bereavement counseling		×					
Economic support						×	
Funeral arrangements						×	
Housing assistance						×	
Mental health services						×	
Foster care						×	
Health care						×	
Legal services						×	
Family planning						×	
Homemaking Services						×	
Parenting Skills						X	

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Domestic Violence Services						X	
Early Intervention						×	
Alcohol/Substance abuse						×	
Child Care						×	
Intensive case management						X	
Family or others as safety resources						X	
Other						×	
Additional information, if necessary: The family was offered bereavement counseling, but chose to seek this service within their religious community. Were services provided to siblings or other children in the household to address any immediate needs and support their well-being in response to the fatality? N/A Explain: The children had no immediate needs in response to the fatality. Were services provided to parent(s) and other care givers to address any immediate needs related to the fatality? No Explain: The family had no immediate needs. ACS offered preventive and bereavement counseling. However, the parents decided to engage in bereavement counseling within their religious community. History Prior to the Fatality							
		Child Inf	ormation				
Did the child have a history of alleged child abuse/maltreatment? Was there an open CPS case with this child at the time of death? No Was the child ever placed outside of the home prior to the death? No Were there any siblings ever placed outside of the home prior to this child's death? No Was the child acutely ill during the two weeks before death? No							
	Ir	nfants Under	One Year O	ld			
During pregnancy, mother: ☐ Had medical complications / infect ☐ Misused over-the-counter or presct ☐ Experienced domestic violence ☐ Was not noted in the case record to	ription drug		[[Iisted	☐ Had heav ☐ Smoked to ☐ Used illic			

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NEW YORK STATE

NYS Office of Children and Family Services - Child Fatality Report

 Infant was born: □ Drug exposed ☑ With neither of the issues listed noted in case record 	☐ With fetal alcohol effects or syndrome			
CPS - Investigative History Three Yea	ars Prior to the Fatality			
There is no CPS investigative history within three years prior to the fa	itality.			
CPS - Investigative History More Than Three	Years Prior to the Fatality			
The family had no CPS history.				
Known CPS History Outsid	le of NYS			
The family had no CPS history outside NYS.				
Services Open at the Time of	of the Fatality			
Required Action(s)				
Are there Required Actions related to compliance issues for providing $\square Yes \square No$	sions of CPS or Preventive services ?			
Preventive Services His	story			
There is no record of Preventive Services History provided to the dece other children residing in the deceased child's household at the time of				
Required Action(s)				
Are there Required Actions related to the compliance issues for pr ☐Yes ☒No	rovision of Foster Care Services?			
Foster Care Placement H	listory			
There is no record of foster care placement history provided to the decother children residing in the deceased child's household at the time of				

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Legal History Within Three Years Prior to the Fatality



Was there any legal activity within three years prior to the fatality investigation? There was no legal activity

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