

Report Identification Number: NY-20-071

Prepared by: New York City Regional Office

Issue Date: Nov 25, 2020

This report, prepared pursuant to section 20(5) of the Social Services Law (SSL), concerns: 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 Senate 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.



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				
FM-Foster Mother	SS-Surviving Sibling	PS-Parent Sub				
CH/CHN-Child/Children	OA-Other Adult					
	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				
CPS-Child Protective Services						
	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	LMC-Lack of Medical Care	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-Other					
	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	TANF-Temporary Assistance to Needy	FC-Foster Care				
Rehabilitative Services	Families					
MH-Mental Health	ER-Emergency Room	COS-Court Ordered Services				
OP-Order of Protection	RAP-Risk Assessment Profile	FASP-Family Assessment Plan				
FAR-Family Assessment Response	Hx-History	Tx-Treatment				
CAC-Child Advocacy Center	PIP-Program Improvement Plan	yo- year(s) old				
CPR-Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	ASTO-Allowing Sex Abuse to Occur					



Case Information

Report Type: Child Deceased **Jurisdiction:** Bronx **Date of Death:** 06/17/2020

Age: 3 month(s) Gender: Female Initial Date OCFS Notified: 06/17/2020

Presenting Information

According to the OCFS-7065, the female infant was admitted to the hospital at the time of her birth in March of 2020. She remained hospitalized until she was pronounced dead on 6/17/20.

Executive Summary

The three-month-old female infant died on 6/17/20. According to the ACS case record, the death was due to natural causes. On 11/17/20, NYCRO received information from the New York City Office of Chief Medical Examiner indicating the case was not referred for an autopsy.

The family had an open preventive services case beginning on 4/6/20. The case was opened during an ACS investigation that revealed the BM had a history of drug misuse and was unable to provide the infant with a minimum degree of care. At the time ACS opened the case, the infant was hospitalized, and the BM resided with the MGM, a 15-year-old maternal aunt, 16-year-old maternal uncle and an adult male uncle. The infant had no siblings and there were no other children in the BM's care. The BF was not involved with the family. ACS addressed the BM's history of marijuana misuse, monitored the infant's health's needs, discussed decisions related to the infant's safety, and provided support services to the family.

The Family Services Progress Notes showed the infant was born at 23 weeks gestation, the BM tested positive for marijuana at the time she gave birth to the infant, and the infant had a positive toxicology for marijuana at birth. The infant was admitted to the local hospital at birth, and ACS obtained information from medical professionals, who diagnosed the infant with serious infections, an upper respiratory distress, extreme prematurity and less than a fifty percent chance of survival. The infant received life sustaining treatment in the neo natal intensive care unit of the local hospital.

In June of 2020, ACS interviewed medical personnel and learned the infant was transferred from the local hospital to another hospital. The infant remained hospitalized at the new hospital for escalation of care. According to the medical professionals, the infant's condition deteriorated as she was unable to breathe on her own. The hospital personnel, BM and MGM participated in meetings, and the participants decided to transition the infant to palliative care where the hospital planned to end care of the infant on a specified date. The documentation reflected the BM received social work, child psychological, palliative care, religious, child life and music therapy support services. The infant died in the hospital on 6/17/20.

ACS submitted the OCFS-7065 Agency Reporting Form for Serious Injuries, Accidents or Deaths of Children in Foster Care and Deaths of Children in Open Child Protective or Preventive Services Cases. The information regarding the infant's death was reported to OCFS under Chapter 485 of the Laws of 2006.

ACS offered the family referrals for services on 6/17/20, and then closed the preventive services case after the family declined burial, bereavement and counseling services on 7/17/20.

Findings Related to the CPS Investigation of the Fatality

Safety Assessment:



 Was sufficient information gathered to make the decision recorded on the: 	
 Safety assessment due at the time of determination? 	N/A
Determination:	
 Was sufficient information gathered to make determination(s) for all allegations well as any others identified in the course of the investigation? 	ons N/A
 Was the determination made by the district to unfound or indicate appropriate? 	N/A
Was the decision to close the case appropriate?	Yes
Was casework activity commensurate with appropriate and relevant statutory or regulatory requirements?	Yes
Was there sufficient documentation of supervisory consultation?	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)? Yes No	
Fatality-Related Information and Investigative Acti	vities
Incident Information	
Date of Death: 06/17/2020	
County where fatality incident occurred: Was 911 or local emergency number called?	New York No
Did EMS respond to the scene? At time of incident leading to death, had child used alcohol or drugs?	No N/A
Child's activity at time of incident:	10/11
Playing Eating Unk	ring / Vehicle occupant nown
Other: Hospitalized	
Did child have supervision at time of incident leading to death? Yes At time of incident supervisor was: Not impaired.	
Total number of deaths at incident event: Children ages 0-18: 1 Adults: 0	

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Household Composition at time of Fatality

Household	Relationship	Role	Gender	Age
Deceased Child's Household	Aunt/Uncle	No Role	Female	15 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Aunt/Uncle	No Role	Male	16 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Aunt/Uncle	No Role	Male	20 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Deceased Child	No Role	Female	3 Month(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Grandparent	No Role	Female	46 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Mother	No Role	Female	19 Year(s)

LDSS Response

Following the infant's death, ACS contacted the BM by telephone on 6/17/20. According to the ACS case record, the ACS Specialist expressed empathy and asked the BM if she needed burial assistance. The BM informed ACS that she did not need assistance as she planned to cremate the infant's body. ACS offered to send referrals for community-based services to the family. The BM declined the offer and ACS provided contact for mobile crisis services.

On 7/14/20, ACS contacted the BM by telephone and informed her that the agency forwarded referrals for bereavement, mental health services, and substance abuse. ACS provided a follow up for mobile crisis and advised the BM of the plans for closing the preventive services case.

According to a progress note dated 7/17/20, the hospital provided the family with bereavement and support services. ACS closed the case and ended involvement with the family.

Official Manner and Cause of Death

Official Manner: Natural

Primary Cause of Death: From a medical cause

Person Declaring Official Manner and Cause of Death: Hospital physician

Multidisciplinary Investigation/Review

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

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

CPS Fatality Casework/Investigative Activities

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
All children observed?	\boxtimes			
When appropriate, children were interviewed?	\boxtimes			
Contact with source?			\boxtimes	
All appropriate Collaterals contacted?	\boxtimes			



and Family Services Child Fatality Report				
Was a death-scene investigation performed?				
Coordination of investigation with law enforcement?				
Was there timely entry of progress notes and other required				
documentation?				
Additional information: ACS did not contemporaneously enter the Family Services Progress Notes.				
Fatality Safety Assessment Activities				
				Unable to
	Yes	No	N/A	Determine
Were there any surviving siblings or other children in the household?	\boxtimes			
Was there an adequate assessment of impending or immediate danger to shousehold named in the report:	surviving	siblings/o	ther chil	dren in the
Within 24 hours?			\boxtimes	
At 7 days?			\boxtimes	
At 30 days?				
Was there an approved Initial Safety Assessment for all surviving siblings/ other children in the household within 24 hours?				
Are there any safety issues that need to be referred back to the local district?		\boxtimes		
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?				
Explain: There was no SCR report regarding the fatality.				
Fatality Risk Assessment / Risk Assessment	Profile			
Tutality MSK / MSCSSMEIL / MSK / MSCSSMEIL	1101110			
	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Was the risk assessment/RAP adequate in this case?				
During the course of the investigation, was sufficient information gathered to assess risk to all surviving siblings/other children in the household?				
Was there an adequate assessment of the family's need for services?	\square			
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?				
Were appropriate/needed services offered in this case				

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The family declined ACS referrals for services.

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 or placed in foster care at any time during this fatality investigation?			\boxtimes	
Were there surviving children in the household that were removed either as a result of this fatality report / investigation or for reasons unrelated to this fatality?				
Explain as necessary: There was no removal regarding the surviving children in the household.				

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

	Provided	Offered,	Offered		Needed		CDR
Services	After Death	but Refused	Offered, Unknown if Used	Not Offered	but Unavailable	N/A	Lead to Referral
Bereavement counseling			\boxtimes				
Economic support			\boxtimes				
Funeral arrangements			\boxtimes				
Housing assistance							
Mental health services			\boxtimes				
Foster care							
Health care							
Legal services							
Family planning							
Homemaking Services							
Parenting Skills							
Domestic Violence Services							
Early Intervention						\boxtimes	
Alcohol/Substance abuse			\boxtimes				
Child Care						\boxtimes	

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NEW Office of Children and Family Services	Child	Fatality	Report	t			
Intensive case management							
Family or others as safety resources							
Other							
Were services provided to siblings or oth their well-being in response to the fatality Explain: ACS provided referrals for community-base Were services provided to parent(s) and fatality? Yes Explain: ACS offered bereavement and support services	y? Yes ed services. other care	. The family	did not acc	cept the refo	errals. e needs relat		
	History	Prior to t	he Fatality	y			
	C	hild Informa	ntion				
Did the child have a history of alleged chi						Yes	
Was the child ever placed outside of the l	-					No	
Were there any siblings ever placed outsi		-	to this chil	d's death?		N/A	
Was the child acutely ill during the two v	veeks befor	re death?				Yes	
	Infants	Under One	Year Old				
During pregnancy, mother: Had medical complications / infections Misused over-the-counter or prescription Experienced domestic violence	n drugs			☐ Had hea☐ Smoked ▼ Used illi		se	

CPS - Investigative History Three Years Prior to the Fatality

Was not noted in the case record to have any of the issues listed

With neither of the issues listed noted in case record

Infant was born:

Drug exposed

Date of SCR Report	Alleged Victim(s)	Alleged Perpetrator(s)	Allegation(s)	Allegation Outcome	Compliance Issue(s)
03/17/2020	Deceased Child, Female, 1 Days	Mother, Female, 19 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Substantiated	Yes
		Mother, Female, 19 Years	Parents Drug / Alcohol Misuse	Substantiated	

☐ With fetal alcohol effects or syndrome

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Report Summary:

The 3/17/20 report alleged the BM gave birth to the female infant in March of 2020. The BM tested positive for marijuana at the time of the infant's birth. The roles of the MGM, adult maternal uncle, 16-year-old maternal uncle and 15-year old maternal aunt were unknown.

Report Determination: Indicated **Date of Determination:** 05/15/2020

Basis for Determination:

ACS substantiated the allegations of IG and PD/AM of the infant by the BM on the basis of evidence that showed the infant tested positive for marijuana at birth, the BM tested positive for marijuana at the time she gave birth to the infant and the BM admitted to not being alert when she was under the influence of marijuana. ACS explained that the BM had a history of harming herself and ingesting pills, and the BM was not engaged in drug treatment or mental health services.

OCFS Review Results:

ACS initiated a timely investigation of the report, and interviewed the BM, household members and collateral contacts. The BM said she had a history of marijuana misuse and she stated she did not have provisions for the infant. The medical professionals said the BM gave birth to the infant at 23 weeks gestation, the infant had pre-existing medical conditions, tested positive for marijuana at birth, and was in the neonatal intensive care unit. ACS visited the hospital, observed the infant and noted she required a ventilator for breathing. ACS completed ongoing child safety assessments and risk assessments.

ACS substantiated the allegations although the infant was never released to the BM.

Are there Required Actions related to the compliance issue(s)? Xes No

Issue:

Appropriate Application of Legal Standards (Abuse/Maltreatment)

Summary:

ACS substantiated the allegations of IG and PD/AM of the infant by the BM although the infant was hospitalized at birth and was never released to the BM. ACS did not appropriately apply the standards of maltreatment to the case circumstances.

Legal Reference:

SSL 412(1) and 412(2)

Action:

ACS must submit a PIP within 45 days that identifies the action the agency has taken or will take to address the citations identified in the fatality report. ACS must meet with the staff involved with this fatality investigation and inform NYCRO of the date of the meeting, who attended and what was discussed.

CPS - Investigative History More Than Three Years Prior to the Fatality

There was no CPS investigative history more than three years prior to the fatality.

Known CPS History Outside of NYS

There was no known CPS History outside of NYS.

Services Open at the Time of the Fatality

Was the deceased child(ren) involved in an open preventive services case at the time of the fatality? Yes Date the preventive services case was opened: 04/06/2020

Was the deceased child(ren) involved in an open Child Protective Services case at the time of the fatality? Yes Date the Child Protective Services case was opened: 04/06/2020

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Evaluative Review of Services that were Open at the Time of the Fatality

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Did the service provider(s) comply with the timeliness and content requirements for progress notes?		\boxtimes		
Did the services provided meet the service needs as outlined in the case record?		\boxtimes		
Did all service providers comply with mandated reporter requirements?	\boxtimes			
Was there information in the case record that indicated the existence of behaviors or conditions that placed the children in the case in danger or increased their risk of harm?				
Casework Contacts				
Casework Contacts				
	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Did the service provider comply with case work contacts, including face- to-face contact as required by regulations pertaining to the program choice?	\boxtimes			
Services Provided				
Services Frovided				
	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
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?	\boxtimes			
Were services provided to parents as necessary to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being?	\boxtimes			
Family Assessment and Service Plan (FAS	D)			
Family Assessment and Service Flan (FAS	1)			
	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Was the most recent FASP approved on time?	\boxtimes			
Was there a current Risk Assessment Profile/Risk Assessment in the most recent FASP?	\boxtimes			
Was the FASP consistent with the case circumstances?	\boxtimes			
Closing				

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		Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine	
Was the decision	to close the Services case appropriate?	\boxtimes				
	Provider					
					1	
		Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine	
Were Services provided by a provider other than the Local Department of Social Services?						
Additional inform N/A	nation, if necessary:					
Required Action(s)						
Are there Required Actions related to compliance issues for provisions of CPS or Preventive services? Yes						
Issue:	Timely/Adequate Case Recording/Progress Notes					
Summary:	ACS did not contemporaneously enter progress notes. Some events occurred on 4/9/20, 4/17/20 and 5/1/20 but were not entered until 6/17/20 and 6/16/20.					
Legal Reference:	18 NYCRR 428.5					
ACS must submit a PIP within 45 days that identifies the action the agency has taken or will take to address the citations identified in the fatality report. ACS must meet with the staff involved with this fatality investigation and inform NYCRO of the date of the meeting, who attended and what was discussed.						

Preventive Services History

ACS opened a preventive services case for the family on 4/6/20. The case was opened to address the BM's need for drug counseling and treatment, and to provide support services to the family. The infant remained hospitalized due to illness and was never in the BM's care. The Family Assessment and Services Plan reflected the BM initially declined the ACS referrals for drug screening and treatment, and the documentation showed the BM had limited coping skills.

ACS maintained telephone contact with the BM, MGM and maternal relatives, visited the home, observed the infant in the hospital and obtained information from hospital personnel. ACS received information from the BM's community-based services provider indicating the BM received health services on 6/12/20. The service provider reported the BM established contact with a clinical health provider, and for medication management, but there were no tests for toxicology screening.

ACS completed the safety assessments, risk assessments and the number of casework contacts to meet the program requirements. The progress notes showed there were no hazardous conditions in the MGM's home. However, ACS did not contemporaneously enter progress notes. Some events occurred on 4/9/20, 4/17/20 and 5/1/20 but were not entered until 6/17/20 and 6/16/20.

Legal History Within Three Years Prior to the Fatality

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

Recommended Action(s)						
Are there any recommended actions for local or state administrative or policy changes? ☐Yes ☒No						
Are there any recommended prevention activities resulting from the review? ☐Yes ☒No						