



**Report Identification Number: BU-15-009**

**Prepared by: Buffalo Regional Office**

**Issue Date: 2/19/2016**

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 **only** 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

<b>Relationships</b>		
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
<b>Contacts</b>		
LE-Law Enforcement	CW-Case Worker	CP-Case Planner
Dr.-Doctor	ME-Medical Examiner	EMS-Emergency Medical Services
DC-Day Care	FD-Fire Department	BM-Biological Mother
CPR-Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation		
<b>Allegations</b>		
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-Others	
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
IND-Indicated	UNF-Unfounded	SO-Sexual Offender
Sub-Substantiated	Unsub-Unsubstantiated	DV-Domestic Violence
LDSS-Local Department of Social Service	ACS-Administration for Children's Services	NYPD-New York City Police Department
PPRS-Purchased Preventive Rehabilitative Services		

## Case Information



**Report Type:** Child Deceased  
**Age:** 6 day(s)

**Jurisdiction:** Erie  
**Gender:** Male

**Date of Death:** 03/01/2015  
**Initial Date OCFS Notified:** 03/02/2015

## Presenting Information

The child was born on 2/23/15 at Women and Children's Hospital of Buffalo. The child was delivered at only 24 weeks gestation and was given a small chance of surviving. Yesterday, 3/1/15, the child passed away at the hospital. There are no surviving siblings.

## Executive Summary

ECCPS had an open investigation regarding the mother and subject child at the time of the subject child's death. The subject child was named in an SCR report received by ECCPS on 2/24/15. which contained allegations of Parent's Drug/Alcohol Misuse. The mother had tested positive for marijuana at the birth of the subject child. The subject child was born extremely premature at 24 weeks gestation and subsequently died six days later due to complications of his prematurity. An autopsy was not done.

ECCPS conducted an appropriate investigation gathering information from the hospital staff, police and mother. Attempts made to locate the father were unsuccessful. The mother had no other children. A referral was made for bereavement counseling for the mother which she declined.

The allegations were unsubstantiated and the report was unfounded on 7/29/15 because although the mother tested positive for and admitted using marijuana three days prior to the subject child's birth, the subject child tested negative for marijuana.

## 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?** Yes

### Determination:

- **Was sufficient information gathered to make determination(s) for all allegations as well as any others identified in the course of the investigation?** Yes, sufficient information was gathered to determine all allegations.
- **Was the determination made by the district to unfound or indicate appropriate?** Yes

### Explain:

Appropriate contacts were made.

**Was the decision to close the case appropriate?** Yes

**Was casework activity commensurate with appropriate and relevant statutory** Yes



or regulatory requirements?

Was there sufficient documentation of supervisory consultation?

Yes, the case record has detail of the consultation.

**Explain:**

The mother had no other children and declined services.

**Required Actions Related to the Fatality**

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

**Fatality-Related Information and Investigative Activities**

**Incident Information**

Date of Death: 03/01/2015

Time of Death: 08:40 AM

Time of fatal incident, if different than time of death: 07:45 AM

County where fatality incident occurred: ERIE

Was 911 or local emergency number called? No

Did EMS to respond to the scene? No

At time of incident leading to death, had child used alcohol or drugs? No

Child's activity at time of incident:

- Sleeping
- Working
- Driving / Vehicle occupant
- Playing
- Eating
- Unknown
- Other: in hospital

Did child have supervision at time of incident leading to death? Yes

Is the caretaker listed in the Household

Composition? No

At time of incident supervisor was: Not impaired.

Total number of deaths at incident event:

Children ages 0-18: 1

**Household Composition at time of Fatality**

Household	Relationship	Role	Gender	Age
Deceased Child's Household	Deceased Child	No Role	Male	6 Day(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Mother	No Role	Female	31 Year(s)



# NYS Office of Children and Family Services - Child Fatality Report

## LDSS Response

ECCPS was advised by the hospital on 2/24/15 that the child's condition was critical and there was a poor prognosis. On 3/2/15 the hospital notified ECCPS that the subject child had passed away on that date in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit due to uncontrollable bleeding which was a complication of his extreme prematurity. ECCPS completed notification to OCFS.

The caseworker made an attempt to visit the mother on 3/7/15 that was unsuccessful. The caseworker did visit the mother at her home on 4/13/15 and discussed with her the supports she had to assist her and made a referral for bereavement counseling and drug treatment which the mother declined. The caseworker obtained information about the father from the mother. Attempts were made to contact the father including phone contacts, a visit to his former girlfriend's home and a letter sent to his last known address. The father did not respond to any of these attempts.

ECCPS unsubstantiated the allegations and unfounded the report on 7/29/15 because although the mother tested positive for marijuana and admitted to using marijuana three days prior to the subject child's birth, the subject child tested negative for marijuana.

## 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:** Erie County does not have an OCFS approved Child Fatality Review Team.

## CPS Fatality Casework/Investigative Activities

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
All children observed?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When appropriate, children were interviewed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contact with source?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All appropriate Collaterals contacted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family Members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# NYS Office of Children and Family Services - Child Fatality Report

Was a death-scene investigation performed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coordination of investigation with law enforcement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was there timely entry of progress notes and other required documentation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Additional information:**

The subject child was born prematurely and only survived six days.  
 A number of attempts were made to contact the father but he did not respond to messages and a letter sent to him.  
 Attempts were made to contact source, all other collaterals complete

**Fatality Safety Assessment Activities**

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Were there any surviving siblings or other children in the household?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**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 Unavailable	N/A	CDR Lead to Referral
Bereavement counseling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Funeral arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental health services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foster care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homemaking Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parenting Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Domestic Violence Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Early Intervention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alcohol/Substance abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intensive case management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family or others as safety resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Additional information, if necessary:**  
 A referral was made for bereavement counseling and drug treatment for the mother, however she declined the services.

**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 mother had no other children.

**Were services provided to parent(s) and other care givers to address any immediate needs related to the fatality? Yes**

**Explain:**  
 A referral was made for bereavement services for the mother.

**History Prior to the Fatality**

**Child Information**

- Did the child have a history of alleged child abuse/maltreatment? Yes
- Was there an open CPS case with this child at the time of death? Yes
- 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? Yes

**Infants Under One Year Old**

**During pregnancy, mother:**

- Had medical complications / infections
- Misused over-the-counter or prescription drugs
- Experienced domestic violence
- Was not noted in the case record to have any of the issues listed
- Had heavy alcohol use
- Smoked tobacco
- Used illicit drugs



# NYS Office of Children and Family Services - Child Fatality Report

**Infant was born:**

- Drug exposed  With fetal alcohol effects or syndrome  
 With neither of the issues listed noted in case record

**CPS - Investigative History Three Years Prior to the Fatality**

Date of SCR Report	Alleged Victim(s)	Alleged Perpetrator(s)	Allegation(s)	Status/Outcome	Compliance Issue(s)
02/24/2015	7418 - Deceased Child, Male, 6 Days	7417 - Mother, Female, 31 Years	Parents Drug / Alcohol Misuse	Unfounded	No

**Report Summary:**

ECCPS received a report from the SCR on 2/24/15 which named the mother as a subject regarding the subject child. The report alleged Parent's Drug/Alcohol Misuse. It was alleged that the mother tested positive for marijuana at the birth of the subject child and admitted using marijuana three days prior.

**Determination:** Unfounded**Date of Determination:** 07/29/2015**Basis for Determination:**

ECCPS unsubstantiated the allegations and unfounded the report because the subject child tested negative for marijuana.

**OCFS Review Results:**

OCFS review found that an appropriate investigation was completed. Collateral contacts were made with hospital staff and police. Attempts were made to contact the father. Referrals were made for bereavement counseling for the mother. The mother had no other children.

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

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

None.

**Known CPS History Outside of NYS**

None known.

**Services Open at the Time of the Fatality****Required Action(s)**

**Are there Required Actions related to compliance issues for provisions of CPS or Preventive services ?**

Yes  No

**Preventive Services History**





# NYS Office of Children and Family Services - Child Fatality Report

There is no record of Preventive Services History provided to the deceased child, the deceased child’s siblings, and/or the other children residing in the deceased child’s household at the time of the fatality.

### Casework Contacts

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Were face-to-face contacts with the child in the child's placement location made with the required frequency?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Required Action(s)

Are there Required Actions related to the compliance issues for provision of Foster Care Services?  
 Yes  No

### Foster Care Placement History

There is no record of foster care placement history provided to the deceased child, the deceased child’s siblings, and/or the other children residing in the deceased child’s household at the time of the fatality.

### 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

### 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