

Report Identification Number: NY-15-049 Prepared by: New York City Regional Office

Issue Date: 12/18/2015

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.
X	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.

NY-15-049 FINAL Page 1 of 13



## **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**

NY-15-049 FINAL Page 2 of 13



**Report Type:** Child Deceased **Jurisdiction:** Queens **Date of Death:** 06/13/2015

Age: 5 month(s) Gender: Male Initial Date OCFS Notified: 06/16/2015

#### **Presenting Information**

The 6/16/15 SCR report alleged that on 6/10/15, the mother put the five-month-old infant to sleep on her bed. The father was also aware the infant was left on the bed. Two hours later when the father went to check the infant, the infant had rolled over and his head was stuck between the mattress and the wall. The infant went into cardiac arrest and suffered a severe neurological injury. The infant was on a ventilator from 6/10/15 to 6/13/15, when the parents decided to remove him from the breathing machine. The sibling had an unknown role.

#### **Executive Summary**

The five-month-old male infant died on 6/13/15 at 6:12 AM after the parents decided to disconnect the ventilator due to the irreversible brain damage the infant suffered on 6/9/15. As of 12/7/15, NYCRO has not received the final autopsy report; however, according to the ACS record, the ME stated the cause of death was positional asphyxia and the manner was accident.

On 6/16/15 the SCR registered a report which included the allegations of DOA/Fatality, IG and LS of the five-month-old infant by the parents.

ACS initiated the investigation within the required timeframe. During the investigation, ACS gathered pertinent information about the circumstances surrounding the infant's death by observing the family's home and by gathering statements from the parents, family members, LE, hospital SW, ER and EMS staff. According to the ACS record, the infant was born full term at a hospital in Queens. Prior to death, the infant had no known pre-existing medical conditions and was meeting his developmental milestones. The infant was last seen alive by the parents during the infant's feeding at approximately 5:30 PM on 6/9/15.

The mother recalled that on 6/9/15, she placed the infant on his back on the queen sized bed for a nap and surrounded the infant with pillows, blankets, and a comforter to prevent the infant from falling to the floor. The father recalled checking on the infant at approximately 7:00 PM. The father said he observed the infant's feet in the air; his head and upper torso wedged between the wall and the mattress. The father picked up and observed the infant was blue in color and not responding. The father called 911 at 7:27 PM and received CPR coaching until the ambulance arrived at 7:30 PM. The parents, sibling, and the PGM arrived at the hospital with the infant around 7:40 PM. The parents admitted to receiving safe sleep education; however, the mother said she had difficulty understanding the information provided by hospital staff, as the information was unavailable in her primary language and the father provided her a brief summary of the safe sleep training. The mother explained that, had she clearly understood the consequences, she would not have habitually allowed the infant to sleep on the bed. There were no inconsistencies in the parents' description of the incident events.

During the investigation, there was no evidence that the parents had a history of domestic violence, mental illness or substance abuse. On 6/16/15, ACS opened the Family Services Stage of the case and offered PPRS services to the family. The parents agreed to accept preventive services and the family received bereavement counseling and case management services.

NY-15-049 FINAL Page 3 of 13



On 7/22/15, ACS substantiated the allegations of DOA/Fatality, IG and LS of the infant by parents on the basis that although accidental, the parents left the infant unsupervised for a long period of time on the queen size bed with only a barrier of pillows and comforters to prevent the child from rolling off the bed. Given the infant's developmental stage, closer supervision was required.

As of 12/7/15, the case remains open for preventive services.

### Findings Related to the CPS Investigation of the Fatality

Daitty Assessment	Safety	Assessm	ent
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• Was sufficient information gathered to make the decision recorded on the:

Approved Initial Safety Assessment?
 Safety assessment due at the time of determination?
 Yes
 Was the safety decision on the approved Initial Safety Assessment

appropriate?

**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:** 

N/A

Was the decision to close the case appropriate?

N/A

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)? $\boxtimes Yes \square No$

Issue:	Provision of Notice of Indication
At the time of investigation closing on 7/17/15, there was no documentation that the provided the notice of indication.	
Legal Reference:	18 NYCRR 432.2(f)(3)(xi)
Action:	ACS must submit a corrective action plan within 45 days that identifies the action the agency has

NY-15-049 FINAL Page 4 of 13



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

### **Fatality-Related Information and Investigative Activities**

	Incident I	ntormation
<b>Date of Death:</b> 06/13/2015		Time of Death: 06:12 AM
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	ferent than date of death: 06/0 fferent than time of death: Un	
County where fatality incid	ent occurred:	QUEENS
Was 911 or local emergency	y number called?	Yes
Time of Call:		07:27 PM
Did EMS to respond to the	scene?	Yes
At time of incident leading	to death, had child used alcoh	ol or drugs? N/A
Child's activity at time of ir	icident:	
	☐ Working	☐ Driving / Vehicle occupant
☐ Playing	☐ Eating	☐ Unknown
☐ Other		

Did child have supervision at time of incident leading to death? Yes How long before incident was the child last seen by caretaker? 2 Hours Is the caretaker listed in the Household Composition? Yes - Caregiver 2

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	Alleged Victim	Male	5 Month(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Father	Alleged Perpetrator	Male	29 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Mother	Alleged Perpetrator	Female	29 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Female	2 Year(s)

NY-15-049 **FINAL** Page 5 of 13



#### LDSS Response

ACS began the investigation on 6/16/15. The Specialist visited the hospital and observed the infant attached to a ventilator and unresponsive. The parents, sibling and PGM were near the infant's room. During the investigation, ACS staff utilized interpreter services to effectively communicate with the mother.

The Specialist interviewed the EMT who stated that FDNY was the first to respond to the scene. The EMT observed FDNY's attempts to resuscitate the unresponsive infant on the living room floor. The EMT observed the infant had a few drops of dry blood in the nose. The EMT placed the infant into the ambulance. A paramedic assisted by providing emergency medication and CPR to the infant, while in route to the hospital. According to the paramedic, the infant remained unresponsive during the seven minute drive to the hospital. Upon the infant's arrival at the hospital, the emergency staff immediately responded and got a pulse.

The hospital SW informed the Specialist, due to the infant's severe condition, he was transferred from Flushing Hospital to LIJ Hospital. According to the SW, the attending physician said the infant had suffered severe brain injury due to lack of oxygen to the brain. ACS' record did not reflect that the parents were made aware of the infant's irreversible condition. Following the infant's death, the parents were referred to be eavement services at Hope for Change at LIJ Hospital.

The children's Dr. informed ACS, the infant and sibling had their last medical appointment on 4/20/15. The infant and sibling were both healthy and their immunizations were up to date. ACS learned that the sibling had a pre-existing medical condition. The sibling's medical specialist verified that the sibling's health condition was managed well by the parents. The sibling required further close monitoring. The Dr. stated there was no activity restriction for the sibling. Both Drs. reported having no concerns regarding the care the parents provided to the infant and the sibling.

The information ACS gathered from LE confirmed FDNY arrived first and performed CPR on the infant. The officer escorted the EMT into the home and the parents were instructed to follow the ambulance to the hospital. LE informed ACS, a neighbor who witnessed the father outside holding the infant was interviewed.

According to the ME, the preliminary autopsy findings showed there were no visible injuries on the infant.

The ACS staff held a Child Safety Conference on 6/17/15. During the conference, the parents provided separate accounts of their activities regarding the infant's care. There were no inconsistencies in the parents' statements regarding the circumstances surrounding the infant's death. The Specialist discussed with the parents; their concerns and the family strengths. ACS assessed that the family would benefit from preventive services to monitor the sibling's health condition and support the family. The family agreed to accept preventive services.

ACS opened the Family Services Stage of the case. The ACS and PPRS staff conducted a joint home visit and assessed the family's needs and the home environment for safety. The staff involved the family in the development of the service plan. On 7/13/15, both parents agreed to receive bereavement counseling services. Subsequently, the family received bi-weekly home visits and was last observed by PPRS on 11/24/15.

### Official Manner and Cause of Death

**Official Manner:** Pending

Primary Cause of Death: Unknown

Person Declaring Official Manner and Cause of Death: Medical Examiner

NY-15-049 FINAL Page 6 of 13



### 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?Yes

**Comments:** There is no OCFS approved Child Fatality Review Team in the New York City region.

### **SCR Fatality Report Summary**

Alleged Victim(s)	Alleged Perpetrator(s)	Allegation(s)	Allegation Outcome
017984 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Mons	017986 - Father, Male, 29 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Substantiated
017984 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Mons	017985 - Mother, Female, 29 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Substantiated
017984 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Mons	017985 - Mother, Female, 29 Year(s)	Lack of Supervision	Substantiated
017984 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Mons	017986 - Father, Male, 29 Year(s)	Lack of Supervision	Substantiated
017984 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Mons	017985 - Mother, Female, 29 Year(s)	DOA / Fatality	Substantiated
017984 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Mons	017986 - Father, Male, 29 Year(s)	DOA / Fatality	Substantiated

### **CPS Fatality Casework/Investigative Activities**

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

NY-15-049 FINAL Page 7 of 13



observation and comments in case notes)?				
Coordination of investigation with law enforcement?	×			
Did the investigation adhere to established protocols for a joint investigation?	×			
Was there timely entry of progress notes and other required documentation?		X		
Additional information: A progress note with event date 6/17/15 was entered on 8/3/15.				
Fatality Safety Assessment Activ	ities			
				<b>Unable to</b>
	Yes	No	N/A	<b>Determine</b>
Were there any surviving siblings or other children in the household?	X			
Was there an adequate safety assessment of impending or immediate of in the household named in the report:	langer to su	ırviving sib	lings/other	children
Within 24 hours?	×			
At 7 days?	X			
At 30 days?	X			
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?		×		
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 Assessm	ent Profile			
	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Was the risk assessment/RAP adequate in this case?	X			
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?	X			

NY-15-049 FINAL Page 8 of 13



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	$\boxtimes$		

### 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?		X		

### **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	X						
<b>Economic support</b>						$\boxtimes$	
Funeral arrangements						$\boxtimes$	
Housing assistance						$\boxtimes$	
Mental health services						$\boxtimes$	
Foster care						$\boxtimes$	
Health care						$\boxtimes$	
Legal services						$\boxtimes$	
Family planning						$\boxtimes$	
Homemaking Services						×	
Parenting Skills						×	
<b>Domestic Violence Services</b>						×	
Early Intervention						X	

NY-15-049 FINAL Page 9 of 13



Alcohol/Substance abuse						×	
Child Care						×	
Intensive case management						X	
Family or others as safety resources						×	
Other						×	
Additional information, if necessary The parents informed ACS staff of the		tention to cr	remate the in	nfant. The fa	amily received	d preventive	services.
Explain: ACS consulted a treatment team on 6/ provided to the sibling. During the conthroughout the entire home was not di Were services provided to parent(s) fatality? Yes Explain: The Cohen Children's Medical Center The family accepted the referral for se	nference reg scussed.  and other  SW referre	garding the s	sibling's safe	ety, the insta	illation of win	ndow guards	2
	Hist	ory Prior	to the Fat	ality			
		Child Inf	ormation				
Did the child have a history of allege Was there an open CPS case with the Was the child ever placed outside of Were there any siblings ever placed Was the child acutely ill during the	is child at the home outside of	the time of prior to the the home p	death? death? rior to this	child's dea	Yes Yes No No Yes		
	Ir	nfants Under	One Year O	ld			
During pregnancy, mother:  ☐ Had medical complications / infect ☐ Misused over-the-counter or prescr ☐ Experienced domestic violence ☐ Was not noted in the case record to	ription drug		] ]	☐ Had heavy☐ Smoked to☐ Used illic			

NY-15-049 FINAL Page 10 of 13



Infant was born  ☐ Drug exposed ☑ With neither of			☐ With fetal alcol	hol effects or synd	rome
	CPS - Investigativ	e History Three Year	s Prior to the F	atality	
Date of SCR Report	Alleged Victim(s)	Alleged Perpetrator(s)	Allegation(s)	Status/Outcome	Compliance Issue(s)
06/10/2015	4101 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Months	4103 - Father, Male, 29 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Indicated	No
	4101 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Months	4103 - Father, Male, 29 Years	Lack of Supervision	Indicated	
	4101 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Months	4104 - Mother, Female, 29 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Indicated	
	4101 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Months	4104 - Mother, Female, 29 Years	Lack of Supervision	Indicated	
During that time,	treport alleged that on 6/9/15 the infant got to the edge of the afant went into cardiac arrest a	the bed and his upper body	y fell into the gap	between the bed an	nd the wall.
<b>Determination:</b>	Indicated		Date of Determin	nation: 07/17/2015	)
sleeping on the b the compromising ACS substantiate	ed the allegation of LS of the i	ng only checked on him or	nce during that tim	of the infant's cap	s found in
	ed the allegation of IG of the is the bed with pillows and a co		vas aware of safe s	sleep practices but	allowed the
members and cor approximately tw medical condition contact with the to casework contact	e investigation within 24 hours aducted safety assessments. A yo hours. The infant sustained in and ACS assessed the family family, and obtained pertinent	CS' findings showed the paserious injuries and subsety would benefit from prevent information from collate	parents left the infa equently died. The ventive services. T ral contacts. ACS	ant on the bed unate sibling had a pree he staff maintained	ttended for existing d adequate

### NY-15-049 FINAL Page 11 of 13

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

#### NEW YORK STATE

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

There was no known CPS history more than three years prior to the fatality				
Known CPS History Outside of N	IYS			
There was no known CPS history outside of NYS.				
Services Open at the Time of the	e Fatality			
Required Action(s)				
Are there Required Actions related to compliance issues for provisions  ☐Yes ☒No	of CPS or l	Preventive	services ?	
Preventive Services History				
There is no record of Preventive Services History provided to the deceased other children residing in the deceased child's household at the time of the  Casework Contacts		eceased chil	d's sibling	s, and/or the
	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?	×			
Required Action(s)				
Are there Required Actions related to the compliance issues for provisi  ☐Yes ☒No	ion of Foste	r Care Ser	vices?	
Foster Care Placement History	у			
There is no record of foster care placement history provided to the deceased other children residing in the deceased child's household at the time of the		leceased chi	ild's sibling	gs, and/or the
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
NY-15-049
FINAL
Page 12 of 13



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

NY-15-049 FINAL Page 13 of 13