

**Report Identification Number: NY-17-039** 

Prepared by: New York City Regional Office

**Issue Date: Nov 09, 2017** 

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							



### **Case Information**

**Report Type:** Child Deceased **Jurisdiction:** Kings **Date of Death:** 04/24/2017

Age: 1 month(s) Gender: Female Initial Date OCFS Notified: 04/24/2017

#### **Presenting Information**

On 4/24/17, the SCR registered a report alleging DOA/FATL and IG of the one-month-old subject child (SC). The BM was named subject of the report.

The report alleged at 2:00 A.M. on 4/24/17, the BM fed the SC and then fell asleep with the SC in her bed. At 7:50 A.M., the BM woke up and found the SC blue and unresponsive. The BM called 911 and emergency services and police responded and found the SC dead on their arrival at the home. The SC was an otherwise healthy child with no known preexisting medical conditions.

#### **Executive Summary**

The one-month-old SC died on 4/24/17 while in the care of her BM. Per the case records, on the morning of 4/24/17, the SC and the BM were bed-sharing on a queen-size bed. At 7:50 A.M., the BM awoke and found the SC (unknown what position) unresponsive and blue. The BM immediately called the BF and then called 911. EMS and LE responded shortly afterwards and found the SC dead upon their arrival at the home. EMS tried unsuccessfully to revive the SC then transported her to Woodhull Hospital, where the medical staff pronounced the SC dead at 8:30 A.M. The SC's autopsy was scheduled and the results are pending.

The BM had a four-year-old son who had a different BF than the SC. The fathers of the two children did not reside in the home but each was actively involved with their child. ACS documented the BF had three other children; a thirteen-year-old daughter from his first wife, another thirteen-year-old daughter, and an eight-year-old son. The three children were not known to the SC or the subject family.

On 4/24/17, ACS received the SCR report and initiated the CPS investigation in a timely manner by contacting the family and relevant collaterals. The information obtained from the collaterals regarding the fatality revealed the SC was not maltreated. Also, the statements provided by the family to ACS, LE and the hospital staff were consistent. ACS assessed the four-year-old surviving sibling (SS) and deemed him safe in the care of his parents. The SS did not witness the incident; he was in the care of his BF at a separate address at the time. ACS also assessed the BF's other three children as safe in their mothers' care.

During the investigation, ACS held a child safety conference and attempted to file an Article 10 Neglect Petition in Brooklyn Family Court to protect the SS but the case was delayed by ACS' Family Court Legal Services attorneys pending further information.

ACS offered the family services which were declined. At every casework contact, ACS utilized language services to engage the BM who communicated only in Spanish. At the time of writing this report, ACS has not made a determination of the report. The SC's autopsy was pending further tests. The criminal investigation was also pending the autopsy report.

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

NY-17-039 FINAL Page 3 of 10



#### **Safety Assessment:**

- Was sufficient information gathered to make the decision recorded on the:
  - **Approved Initial Safety Assessment?**

Yes

Safety assessment due at the time of determination?

N/A

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

#### **Determination:**

Was sufficient information gathered to make determination(s) for The CPS report had not yet been all allegations as well as any others identified in the course of the investigation?

determined at the time this Fatality report was issued.

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

#### **Explain:**

ACS has not determined this report. The investigation determination safety assessment has not been submitted.

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:**

ACS had not made a determination of the CPS investigation.

#### **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:** 04/24/2017 Time of Death: 08:30 AM

Time of fatal incident, if different than time of death:

07:50 AM

County where fatality incident occurred: Kings Was 911 or local emergency number called? Yes

07:53 AM Time of Call:

Did EMS respond to the scene? Yes At time of incident leading to death, had child used alcohol or drugs? No

NY-17-039 FINAL Page 4 of 10

NEW YORK STATE	Office of Children and Family Services
----------------------	--

Adults: 0

### **Child Fatality Report**

Child's activity at time of incide	ent:	
	☐ Working	Driving / Vehicle occupant
☐ Playing	☐ Eating	Unknown
Other		
Did child have supervision at ti	me of incident leading to	death? Yes
Is the caretaker listed in the Ho	ousehold Composition? Y	es - Caregiver 1
At time of incident supervisor v	was:	
☐ Drug Impaired		Absent
Alcohol Impaired		
Distracted		☐ Impaired by illness
☐ Impaired by disability		Other:
Total number of deaths at incid	lent 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	Female	1 Month(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Father	No Role	Male	37 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Mother	Alleged Perpetrator	Female	28 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Other - Half Sibling	No Role	Male	4 Year(s)
Other Household 1	Father	No Role	Male	30 Year(s)

#### **LDSS Response**

On 4/24/17, the ACS Specialist initiated the CPS investigation and contacted the hospital and the LE regarding the fatality. They reported that the preliminary findings did not reveal the SC was maltreated. The hospital staff stated the SC did not have any pre-existing medical concerns.

The Specialist then visited the family at the case address. The BM stated she was bed-sharing with the SC on the same bed when the incident occurred. She also admitted to receiving safe-sleep instructions in the hospital after giving birth. She denied she took prescribed medication or drank any alcoholic beverages prior to the incident. The SS was with his BF at a separate address at the time of the visit and could not be assessed. There was a play pen in the home which appeared not in use. The BM's relatives and neighbors described her as an amazing mother who took good care of her children.

Also on 4/24/17, the SS' BF stated that he had no safety concerns for the SS while in the BM's care. He said the BM was a great mother to her children. The Specialist observed the SS and there were no indications of neglect or maltreatment documented for him. The SS' BF stated the SS would remain in his care until the BM was ready to care for him. There were no safety or health hazards in the home.

On 4/25/17, the BF disclosed he was residing with the mother of two of his other children. The mother was not aware of his relationship with the BM and did not know about the SC. The BF did not want ACS to disclose the details of the ongoing case to the mother. He also disclosed he was involved in the care of his first daughter who resided in the Bronx

NY-17-039 FINAL Page 5 of 10



with her mother. The BF declined ACS' offer of funeral assistance because he already paid for the funeral expenses.

On 4/26/17, the Specialist visited the BF's oldest daughter in her mother's home in the Bronx. The child's mother did not report any concerns for the child in the BF's care. The Specialist assessed the child and deemed her safe in the home. The child reported a good relationship with the BF and felt safe in his care.

Later that same day, the Specialist assessed the BF's two children in their mother's home and did not document any concerns for the children. The children's mother denied DV in her relationship and described the BF as a great father to his children.

On 4/28/17, the ME reported that preliminary findings did not reveal "anything abnormal" to the SC pending the results of other tests.

On 5/1/17, ACS held a child safety conference (CSC). The attendees at the CSC recommended family court intervention for the family. On 5/2/17, ACS attempted to file an Article 10 Neglect Petition in Brooklyn Family Court but the case was delayed pending further information from the ME.

On 5/12/17, the Specialist assessed the SS at his daycare (DC) and did not document any concerns for him. The DC staff did not report any behavioral concerns for the SS, or the parents' ability to care for him. The staff described the family's engagement with the DC as "great."

Between 6/8/17 and 9/22/17, the Specialist made several casework contacts with the family and other collaterals. The children's pediatrician stated the children's immunizations were current and there were no concerns about the parents' ability to care for them. ACS offered the family services but they declined. The ME and LE did not provide any new information about the fatality. The SS had returned to the BM's care but still visited with his BF. ACS made ongoing assessments of the SS at his school and in the parents' homes. There were no safety concerns for the SS.

At the time of writing this report, ACS had not made a determination of the CPS investigation. The LE continued to be involved.

#### Official Manner and Cause of Death

Official Manner: Pending

**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 approved protocols for joint investigation.

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

**Comments:** New York City does not have an OCFS approved Child Fatality Review Team.

#### SCR Fatality Report Summary

Alleged Victim(s)	Alleged Perpetrator(s)	Allegation(s)	Allegation
			Outcome

NY-17-039 FINAL Page 6 of 10

NEW YORK STATE	Office of Children and Family Services
----------------------	--

040881 - Deceased Child, Female, 1	040882 - Mother, Female, 28	DOA / Fatality	Pending
Mons	Year(s)		
040881 - Deceased Child, Female, 1	040882 - Mother, Female, 28	Inadequate	Pending
Mons	Year(s)	Guardianship	_

### **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?				
Contact with source?	$\boxtimes$			
All appropriate Collaterals contacted?	$\boxtimes$			
Was a death-scene investigation performed?	$\boxtimes$			
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)?				
Coordination of investigation with law enforcement?	$\boxtimes$			
Did the investigation adhere to established protocols for a joint investigation?				
Was there timely entry of progress notes and other required documentation?	$\boxtimes$			

### **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 dangin the household named in the report:	ger to sur	viving sib	lings/oth	er children
Within 24 hours?				
At 7 days?				
At 30 days?				
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?		$\boxtimes$		

NY-17-039 FINAL Page 7 of 10



When safety factors were present that please children in the household in impending a harm, were the safety interventions, included adequate?								
Fatality Risk Assessment / Risk Assessment Profile								
				Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine	
Was the risk assessment/RAP adequate	in this case	?						
During the course of the investigation, w gathered to assess risk to all surviving si household?								
Was there an adequate assessment of the	e family's n	eed for sei	rvices?					
Did the protective factors in this case red in Family Court at any time during or a	-		-					
Were appropriate/needed services offere	ed in this ca	ise						
DI .		D	4 F . 11 .	T				
Placement	Activities in	Response to	the Fatality	Investigatio	on			
				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?								
Were there surviving children in the hou as a result of this fatality report / investi to this fatality?								
	Legal Activ	ity Related	to the Fatality	y				
Was there legal activity as a result of the	fatality inv	estigation	? There was	no legal a	ctivity.			
Services P	rovided to tl	ne Family in	Response to	the Fatality	V			
Services	Provided After Death	Offered, but Refused	Offered, Unknown if Used	Needed but not Offered	Needed but Unavailab	N/A	CDR Lead to Referral	
Bereavement counseling		$\boxtimes$						
<b>Economic support</b>								
Funeral arrangements		$\boxtimes$						
Housing assistance								

NY-17-039 FINAL Page 8 of 10

STATE and Family Services	Chila	. Fat <u>alit</u> y	y Report	[			
Mental health services						$\boxtimes$	
Foster care						$\boxtimes$	
Health care						$\boxtimes$	
Legal services							
Family planning						$\boxtimes$	
Homemaking Services						$\boxtimes$	
Parenting Skills						$\boxtimes$	
<b>Domestic Violence Services</b>						$\boxtimes$	
Early Intervention						$\boxtimes$	
Alcohol/Substance abuse						$\boxtimes$	
Child Care						$\boxtimes$	
Intensive case management						$\boxtimes$	
Family or others as safety resources						$\boxtimes$	
Other							
	History	Prior to the	he Fatality	y			
	C	hild Informa	ation				
		•	49			N	
Did the child have a history of alleged ch Was there an open CPS case with this ch						No No	
Was the child ever placed outside of the						No	
Were there any siblings ever placed outs	_			d's death?		No	
Was the child acutely ill during the two						No	
	I., f., ., 4.	. II J O	V 014				
	Intants	Under One	Year Old				
During pregnancy, mother:  Had medical complications / infections  Misused over-the-counter or prescription  Experienced domestic violence  Was not noted in the case record to have	on drugs	e issues liste	[ [ :d	☐ Had heav☐ Smoked☐ Used illi		e	
Infant was born:  ☐ Drug exposed  ☐ With neither of the issues listed noted i					al alcohol eff	ects or sy	ndrome
CPS - Investiga	ative Histo	ory Three	Years Pri	ior to the	Fatality		

There is no CPS investigative history in NYS within three years prior to the fatality.

NY-17-039 FINAL Page 9 of 10



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

The SC's BM did not have any prior ACS history but the BF was known as a petitioner/respondent in two COIs and as a subject in an indicated SCR report for SA and IG.

The BF's indicated case was dated 2/23/12. Per the report, the BF was residing with his girlfriend and her fourteen-year-old daughter. The report alleged the BF had been sexually abusing the daughter from the age of five until she was thirteen. The BF also attempted to have intercourse with the child.

ACS Bronx Field Office investigated the report. During the investigation, the child was interviewed several times and she was found to be credible and consistent. The mother obtained obtain an Order of Protection (OOP) against the BF from Bronx Family Court (BxFC). The child was referred to counseling as recommended by Child Advocacy Center.

On 4/20/12, ACS appropriately substantiated the allegations of SA and IG against the BF. The BF declined Sex Offender services.

On 7/31/12, the BxFC ordered ACS to conduct a Court Ordered Investigation/Home Study on the motion filed by the BF seeking visitation for his then nine-year-old daughter. The BxFC also ordered ACS to investigate and possibly file an Article 10 Petition against the BF.

On 4/9/13, the case was heard in BxFC. Neither the BF nor the mother was present in court. The BxFC dismissed the active OOP and the order for ACS to file an Article 10 Petition against the BF. There were no concerns for the BF's children throughout case assignment.

#### **Known CPS History Outside of NYS**

The family did not have any known CPS history outside of New York State.

#### **Preventive Services History**

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.

#### 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?  $\square$ Yes  $\boxtimes$ No

Are there any recommended prevention activities resulting from the review?  $\square$ Yes  $\boxtimes$ No