

## Child Fatality Summary

**Child's Name:** A'Riyan Birkett-Johnson

**County:** Orange

**Date of Birth:** 05/12/2020

**Date of Death:** 04/18/2023

**Report Number:** 2023-127410

### Family Composition Chart

Name	Age at Time of the Incident	Relationship with Deceased Child
A'Riyan Birkett-Johnson	2 years old	Child Victim
[REDACTED]	1 year old	Sibling
[REDACTED]	5 years old	Sibling
Appalonia Lampkin	32 years old	Mother

### Circumstances Surrounding Death

On April 18, 2023, the 2-year-old child passed away after being left unattended in a car seat in their hotel room by the mother.

According to the mother and law enforcement, the following information was provided.

On April 18, 2023, the child woke up at 5:45 a.m. The mother woke the other two children up at 6:30 a.m. to get the oldest ready for school. She took all the children and walked to the bus stop at 7:00 a.m. On that day the mother had an appointment scheduled with FEMA at 3:00 p.m., in the conference room a few doors down from her room. She planned to take the two children with her because she does not have much support. She knew she needed her friend to watch the children the next day, so she did not want to exhaust her babysitters. FEMA called her at approximately 12:00 p.m. and asked if she could come to the appointment at 1:40 p.m. The mother seemed to think she would have to run down and sign paperwork and she thought it would be very quick. The telephone meetings usually only take about seven minutes, so she decided to leave the children in the room since it would be quick. She left the 1-year-old lying in bed. The 2-year-old likes to climb on things, and she did not want him to climb, fall, get hurt, or put something in his mouth so she put him in the car seat in front of the television to watch Coco Melon. The car seat was sitting in front of the nightstand so he could not accidentally knock it backward and fall over. She connected the shoulder straps but did not secure the buckle near the groin area because her nails are too long to push the button. She never secures that part, even in the car, because it's difficult for her so she always secures the shoulder area and then puts the seatbelt across for added security. She stated the straps were set to whatever tightness the father last had them since she cannot adjust them with her nails. Before she left, the child was playful

and engaged in watching television. The mother remembered she left the room at exactly 1:42 p.m.

When she got down to the conference room, she ended up having to talk to several FEMA representatives. She was emotional and crying because she was desperate for housing and needed to be out of the hotel the following week. The visit took longer because she was crying and trying to express the urgency of finding housing. She thinks she was there approximately 20 minutes but no more than 30 minutes. She immediately went back to the room to make sure the children were okay. As soon as she walked in, she saw the 2-year-old slumped down in his car seat with spit coming out of his mouth; she hollered and tried to wake him up. She immediately got him out of the seat, and she could feel his whole body was limp. She instantly ran out the door yelling for help and screaming for somebody to call 911. A FEMA representative called 911 at 2:24 p.m. The mother never attempted CPR because she did not know how to do it. Law Enforcement and Emergency Medical Services responded to the hotel. The child was transported to Arnold Palmer Hospital.

On April 18, 2023, A'Riyan Birkett-Johnson was pronounced deceased at 3:28 p.m.

The mother consented to a drug screen and was positive for THC and alcohol.

The Orange County Sheriff's Office investigated the death of A'Riyan Birkett-Johnson (23-24249). Per the Orange County Sheriff's Detective, he attempted to verify the mother's timeline. He reviewed video footage that shows the mother was out of the room for 46 minutes which is far longer than she claimed to have been gone. In addition, the room smelled heavily of marijuana and had a tray with marijuana on it. The mother had several adult items in the room, like nail polish remover, purses, etc. but only a small area with the children's things. On May 4, 2023, Appalonia Lampkin was arrested and charged with Aggravated Manslaughter of a Child, Culpable Negligence, and Neglect of a Child (5 Counts).

The death certificate was received on May 8, 2023, and indicated District 9 Medical Examiner Chantel Y. Njiwaji, M.D., signed and certified the death certificate for A'Riyan Birkett-Johnson on April 20, 2023. ME# 23-09-00819.

Cause of Death: Positional Asphyxia

Manner of Death: Accident

On May 31, 2023, the Department of Children and Families' investigation was closed with:

- Verified Findings of Death, Inadequate Supervision, and Substance Misuse – Illicit Drugs as to A'Riyan Birkett-Johnson, with Appalonia Lampkin as the caregiver responsible.

- Verified Findings of Inadequate Supervision and Substance Misuse-Illicit Drugs as to [REDACTED], with Appalonia Lampkin as the caregiver responsible.

**Other Children in the Family:**

The mother has a total of four children. The oldest child lives in Fort Pierce, FL. with the maternal grandparents, and he has lived with them since birth. On May 17, 2023, the 1-year-old and 5-year-old siblings were sheltered and on May 22, 2023, a Termination of Parental Rights Petition was filed with the court. The 1-year-old and the 5-year-old were placed with their father. Grief counseling information was provided to the family.

**Summary of Current Agency Involvement with Family**

The family did not have any open services.

**Summary of Prior Agency Involvement with Family**

The family has two prior abuse reports in 2018 and 2021. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] he 2021 investigation was closed with no findings of environmental hazards and not substantiated findings of medical neglect.



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Central Region Child Fatality Prevention Specialist  
Kirby Morgan

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6/2/23

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Date



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Central Region Director of Child Protection  
Stephanie Weis

\_\_\_\_\_  
6/2/23

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Date