

Office of the Inspector General Report to the Governor and General Assembly (Jan. 2024)

OIG2024 #42

Child No. 42	DOB: 02/2022	DOD: 07/2022	Undetermined
Age at death:	5 months		
Cause of death:	Sudden unexpected infant death syndrome		
Reason for review:	Open intact family services case at time of child's death; indicated child protection investigation within one year of child's death		
Action taken:	Investigatory review of records		
<u>Narrative:</u> Five-month-old was found unresponsive face down on a sofa by her mother, where the infant had been asleep with her 17-year-old brother. She was brought to the hospital by ambulance and pronounced deceased. The brother stated he fed the infant around 11:00pm and he went to sleep around 1:00am. DCFS unfounded the infant's mother and father for death by neglect (#51); cuts, bruises, welts, injuries, and oral abrasions by neglect (#61); and environmental neglect (#82); but indicated the mother for substantial risk of physical injury/environment injurious to health and welfare by neglect (#60).			
<u>Reason for Review:</u> In February 2022, DCFS received a report that the infant tested positive for cocaine and THC at birth. That day, the CPI observed the infant at the hospital. Hospital staff reported the mother tested positive for cocaine and THC in November 2021, and for THC in December 2021 and January 2022. The infant's mother denied she had used cocaine since December, and stated she used marijuana the day before the infant's birth. She reported she had enrolled in substance use treatment twice in recent months, but left the program first because of illness, and the second time because of a dispute with another resident. Hospital staff noted the infant did not show signs of withdrawal, and they discharged the infant two days later. The parents agreed to a safety plan for the infant and four of her siblings, who were between the ages of 1 year and 14 years, to stay with their maternal aunt. The parents agreed to stay sober, cooperate with drug screenings, and complete substance use assessments to end the safety plan. The CPI ended the safety plan after the mother began substance use treatment, and the parents agreed to intact family services. DCFS indicated the investigation for substance misuse by abuse (#15) and unfounded the investigation for substantial risk of physical injury/environment injurious to health and welfare by neglect (#60). The family's intact worker recommended substance use treatment for the mother, therapy for the parents, and protective daycare. The parents had a bassinet for the infant and a pack-and-play for the infant's 1-year-old sibling. The intact worker noted no concerns in the home and observed the parents were appropriate with the children. The intact worker visited the home weekly, the parents participated in services, and the infant received follow-up care with her pediatrician. In May 2022, the mother relapsed. The intact worker submitted referrals for the parents to begin individual therapy and the parents located a daycare program for the younger children. Approximately two weeks before the infant's death, the maternal grandmother moved into the home under hospice care. Three days before the infant's death, the intact worker conducted a home visit and noted no concerns for health or safety in the home. The next day, two days before the infant's death, the maternal grandmother died. The intact family services case remained open at the time of the infant's death.			