

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

OIG2024 #79

Child No. 79	DOB: 11/2022	DOD: 11/2022	Accident
Age at death:	10 hours		
Cause of death:	Complications of placental abruption; significant contributing condition of maternal cocaine use		
Reason for review:	Two unfounded child protection investigations within one year of child's death		
Action taken:	Investigatory review of records		
<u>Narrative:</u>	One-day-old was pronounced deceased at the hospital. He had been born by emergency c-section at 29 weeks gestation. The newborn required intubation and resuscitation immediately after birth		

and was transferred to a different hospital. He had perinatal respiratory depression, severe encephalopathy, and severe metabolic acidosis. The newborn and his mother tested positive for opiates, cocaine, and marijuana. DCFS did not investigate the newborn's death for abuse or neglect.

Reason for Review: In February 2022, DCFS received a report that the newborn's then 3-year-old sister lived with her maternal grandmother in a truck, and the grandmother's paramour used drugs. The CPI had difficulty locating the family. The sister's paternal grandmother stated they may have been with the newborn's maternal uncle, who was not allowed around children due to an indicated sexual abuse investigation. After one month, the CPI found the family. The sister reported she felt safe with her maternal grandmother and stated they always lived in a house. The grandmother stated she moved in with her son, the maternal uncle, when she encountered financial difficulties, but she was working on obtaining a new home. She denied her paramour lived with her. The CPI observed that the grandmother and sister had their own space in the home. DCFS unfounded the investigation for inadequate shelter (#77). In August 2022, DCFS received a report that the maternal grandmother allowed the maternal uncle to live in the home with children, including the newborn's 4-year-old sister, and allowed him to be unsupervised with the sister. The CPI was unable to locate the family following a diligent search and sought assistance from law enforcement. Law enforcement reported they had a warrant for the uncle's arrest for a residential burglary charge, but they were also unable to locate the family. In September 2022, while the investigation remained pending, DCFS received a report that the newborn's mother, who was pregnant, arrived at the emergency room with cellulitis in her arm. The reporter stated the cellulitis was from a needle, the mother had a history of heroin use, she did not receive prenatal care, and she lacked stable housing. The hospital discharged the mother following treatment, and the hospital did not have the family's address. DCFS unfounded the investigation for substantial risk of sexual injury (#22).