

Office of the Inspector General Report to the Governor and General Assembly
(Jan. 2025)

OIG2025, Child#14

Child No. 14	DOB: 09/2023	DOD: 11/2023	Homicide
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Age at death: 2 months

Cause of death: Blunt force injuries of the head and neck

Alleged perpetrator: Father

Reason for review: One unfounded child protection investigation within one year of child's death

Action taken: Investigatory review of records

Narrative: Two-month-old arrived at the emergency room by ambulance for respiratory distress. Two days later, she was pronounced deceased. A child abuse pediatrician evaluated the infant and documented multiple injuries, including head and brain injuries, liver lacerations, and both healing and non-healing injuries to multiple ribs that happened over time. The mother reported she left the child in the father's care. The father's story changed multiple times, but he later admitted to law enforcement that he became frustrated with the infant and repeatedly hit her head on multiple hard surfaces. Her father was arrested and has been charged with first degree murder. DCFS indicated the father for death by abuse (#1); head injuries by abuse (#2); bone fractures by abuse (#9); and cuts, bruises, welts, abrasions, and oral injuries by abuse (#11). DCFS unfounded the infant's mother for the same allegations.

Reason for Review: One year before the infant's death, DCFS received a report that the infant's then 17-year-old mother and her 18-year-old brother, the infant's uncle, were left home alone for two days, and the infant's mother had also been a primary caregiver for the uncle on prior occasions. The reporter stated the uncle had an intellectual disability and special needs, and the infant's mother was responsible for changing the uncle's diaper, feeding him, bathing him, putting him to bed, and getting him to school. The CPI spoke with school staff who worked with the infant's mother and uncle, who stated it was not appropriate for the mother, who also had intellectual disabilities, to be in a caregiver role for another person. The infant's maternal grandmother told the CPI the mother was capable of caring for the uncle, but the only time they were left home alone was for a few minutes in the mornings, after her paramour left for work and before she arrived home. The mother told the CPI she

enjoyed caring for the uncle, but she denied she had to do so often. DCFS unfounded the maternal grandmother for inadequate supervision (#74).