

Child Fatality Summary

Child's Name: Jaquez Norton

County: Polk

Date of Birth: 10/29/2020

Date of Death: 03/11/2024

Report Number: 2024-093590

Family Composition Chart

Name	Age at Time of the Incident	Relationship with Deceased Child
Jaquez Norton	3 years old	Child Victim
[REDACTED]	3 months old	Half Sibling by mother
Yeimarie Baez-Rivera	22 years old	Mother
Robert Einzig	23 years old	Mother's Paramour

Circumstances Surrounding Death

On March 13, 2024, a report was received indicating the 3-year-old child passed away after being involved in a gang related shooting with his mother and the mother's paramour on March 11, 2024.

According to the family, the following information was provided.

On March 11, 2024, the mother, her paramour, and the mother's two children were in their vehicle at the Cambridge Bridge Cove apartment complex. The mother and paramour indicated they had gone to the apartment complex to visit with a friend when they observed a white Dodge Challenger. The mother and paramour did not get a good feeling about the Challenger and started to try to leave, but the Challenger then moved and blocked the family's vehicle in. According to the mother and paramour, three males got out of the vehicle and approached them on both sides with firearms in plain view. The mother was removed from the vehicle by one of the suspects who held a firearm to her head. The mother and paramour were yelling that there were kids in the car. The mother was able to grab the infant and get away. Gunfire started between the paramour and the suspects, but it is unknown who fired first. During the exchange, the paramour was non-fatally shot. One of the suspects was shot and killed. The 3-year-old in the back seat of the vehicle was struck by four bullets. 911 was called at 6:33 p.m. The Lakeland Police Department (LPD) and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) responded to the apartment complex.

On March 11, 2024, the child was pronounced deceased on scene at 6:45 p.m.

The suspects used a handgun and a rifle to fire into the mother and paramour's vehicle. The paramour had a 9mm handgun in his possession and fired back at the suspects. A

semi-automatic pistol was also found in the trunk of the car. LPD found 18 rifle rounds and nine 9mm rounds on the ground around the vehicle.

The paramour was unable to provide an exact location of the friend that he was allegedly going to visit at the apartment complex. He was provided a map to assist with trying to locate the friend's apartment of the friend; however, he could only provide the general proximity. There are concerns for inconsistencies in the history provided by the mother and paramour.

The Department's Child Protective Investigator followed up at the address location to where EMS responded and conducted additional neighbor collateral contacts. Neighbors stated that prior to the incident with the suspects, the mother and paramour had parked their vehicle horizontal in a handicapped parking space, entered one of the apartments, returned to their vehicle, and as they attempted to leave the suspects' vehicle blocked them in and opened fire. Neighbor collaterals noted it was not random. Another neighbor noted that after being shot, the paramour ensured the drugs from their vehicle (marijuana and "carts" [glass tubes that hold cannabis oil for use in vape pens]) were removed and taken to one of the apartments nearby, prior to law enforcement arriving. Another neighbor collateral stated that the mother and paramour knew the suspects and had been warned not to go to that apartment complex or they would be killed.

The Department was informed that the paramour eventually admitted to LPD that he was at the incident location to sell drugs and that he knowingly put the two small children and mother in harm's way. The paramour admitted that after he and the child had been shot, he removed the drugs from the vehicle prior to the arrival of LPD. The mother continued to deny knowing her paramour was there to sell drugs and has remained in a relationship with him.

The Lakeland Police Department investigated the death of the child (2024-24715). At closure of the Department's investigation, the criminal investigation remains open. The LPD Detective indicated one of the suspects had been arrested for two counts of attempted murder, one suspect is deceased, and one remains on the run.

The death certificate was received on March 26, 2024, and indicated District 10 Medical Examiner Stephen J. Nelson, M.D., signed and certified the death certificate for the child on March 13, 2024. ME# 24-10-FA-140.

Cause of Death: Multiple Gunshot Wounds

Manner of Death: Homicide

On May 10, 2024, the Department of Children and Families' investigation was closed with:

- Verified Findings of Death, Inadequate Supervision, Environmental Hazards, and Substance Misuse – Illicit Drugs as to the child, with the mother and her paramour as the caregivers responsible.
- Verified Findings of Threatened Harm, Inadequate Supervision, Environmental Hazards, and Substance Misuse – Illicit Drugs as to the sibling, with the mother and her paramour as the caregivers responsible.
- Verified Findings of Failure to Protect as to the child and the sibling, with the mother as the caregiver responsible.

Other Children in the Family:

Grief counseling information was provided to the family.

[REDACTED]

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 members collectively have seven prior abuse reports received from 2006 to

[REDACTED], and the remaining two

involved the decedent and the infant sibling (one each).


The department was last involved with the family in December of 2023 when the infant sibling had burns on her left forearm. The mother was bathing the infant when the water “spiked” very hot. The infant was seen at the Child Protection Team and their findings were negative for physical abuse. The infant was additionally taken for a skeletal survey and that yielded negative results for any fractures, to include any that were old or healing. This investigation was closed with not substantiated findings of inadequate supervision

In 2021 the department was involved with the family when Jaquez was just around 4 months old. The mother and his father (who is not the paramour and not a member of the current household) were not in a relationship and their co-parenting was strained due to the father having another child with another woman at the same time as Jaquez being born. The mother and a maternal aunt were arrested for physically battering the

father and the maternal aunt for pepper spraying him. This investigation was closed with not substantiated findings of family violence threatens the child.

[REDACTED]


[REDACTED]



Central Region Child Fatality Prevention Specialist
Kirby Morgan

5/20/24

Date



Central Region Director of Child Protection
Stephanie Weis

5/20/24

Date