Child Fatality Summary

Child's Name: Jackson Bivens

County: Hillsborough

Date of Birth: 1/17/2019

Date of Death: 11/29/2024

Report Number: 2024-400609

Family Composition Chart

Name	Age at Time of the Incident	Relationship with Deceased Child
Jackson Bivens	5 years	Deceased
Terry Bivens, Jr.	44 years	Father

Circumstances Surrounding Death

An investigation was received on November 29, 2024, concerning the death of 5-year-old Jackson and his father due to an apparent murder/suicide. Jackson's parents were separated, and he resided part time in each home. The incident occurred while Jackson was visiting his father's home.

Records noted that the parents were married for approximately 20 years, and they separated in 2023. The mother was seeking a divorce and the father reportedly refused to sign the divorce documents. A voluntary custody arrangement was in place, and the child spent one week at each home.

Jackson was scheduled to spend Thanksgiving week with the mother. However, the father contacted the mother on November 28th (Thanksgiving Day) and asked to spend Thanksgiving dinner with Jackson. The mother agreed and she dropped Jackson off at their agreed upon location around 6:00 p.m. She received a text from the father two hours later and arrangements were made to exchange Jackson at 8:40 p.m. Later, the mother arrived at their agreed upon location, but the father was not there. She called and texted him several times with no response, then she waited approximately 30 minutes before driving to his home. Once at his home, she knocked several times but there was no answer at his door. She waited at his residence for approximately one hour prior to driving back to her home, where she and Jackson resided with the maternal grandparents.

The mother continued to reach out to the father on the morning of November 29th, with no response. She returned to his home around 7:15 a.m. and called law enforcement to request a welfare check. Law enforcement arrived at the father's home a short time later and knocked on his door, but there was no response from the father. Around 10:00 a.m. the mother returned to the father's home with maternal grandparents. Once at the residence they knocked on the father's door and called his phone, but they received no response. At one point the grandfather located an unlocked window and the mother

crawled through the window and discovered Jackson and his father unresponsive from what appeared to be gunshot wounds. She then ran to the front door of the home and notified the grandparents, who called 911. First responders arrived on scene a short time later and pronounced both Jackson and his father deceased.

The father owned several firearms, and they were kept in his residence. He had no known mental health diagnosis and there were no prior concerns for Jackson in his care. Sources familiar with the family advised that there had never been reasons to suspect that the father would harm Jackson or himself.

Dr. D. Mcennan with the Hillsborough County Medical Examiner's Office completed an autopsy on the child. His cause of death was listed as gunshot wound to head perforating skull and brain and his manner of death was deemed a homicide. Dr. D. Mcennan also conducted the autopsy on the father. His cause of death was deemed gunshot wound to head perforating skull and brain and his manner of death a suicide.

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office conducted a criminal investigation concerning the deaths. Records note that the father was able to gain access to the mother's iCloud account in the days leading up to the murder/suicide, and he located photos and messages which lead to the parents arguing over infidelity. It was determined that the father murdered the child then killed himself. There were no other suspects identified, and the criminal case was subsequently closed.

Based on the interviews and evidence gathered during the investigation, Child Protective Investigations in Hillsborough County closed their investigation with verified finding of the death, internal injuries, and physical injury maltreatment, identifying the father as the caregiver responsible.

Other Children in the Family

The father had no other children and there were no other children residing in his home.

Summary of Prior Agency Involvement with Family

The family has no child welfare history.

1-30-2026

Mechell Young-Williams
Child Fatality Prevention Specialist
SunCoast Region

Date

Robert W. Wilson

01-30-2026

Robert Wilson
Operations and Management Consultant Manager
SunCoast Region

Date