Report Identification Number: SV-14-026 Prepared by: Spring Valley Regional Office

Issue Date: 6/26/2015

This	s report, prepared pursuant to section 20(5) of the Social Services Law (SSL), concerns:
X	A report made to the New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) involving the death of a child.
	The death of a child for whom child protective services has an open case.
	The death of a child whose care and custody or custody and guardianship has been transferred to an authorized agency.
	The death of a child for whom the local department of social services has an open preventive service case.

The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) is mandated by section 20 of the SSL to investigate or cause for the investigation of the cause and circumstances surrounding the death, review such investigation, and prepare and issue a fatality report in regard to the categories of deaths noted above involving a child, except where a local or regional fatality review team issues a report, as authorized by law.

Such report must include: the cause of death; the identification of child protective or other services provided or actions taken regard to such child and child's family; any extraordinary or pertinent information concerning the circumstances of the child's death; whether the child or the child's family received assistance, care or services from the social services district prior to the child's death; any action or further investigation undertaken by OCFS or the social services district since the child's death; and as appropriate, recommendations for local or state administrative or policy changes.

This report contains no information that would identify the deceased child, his or her siblings, the parent, parents, or other persons legally responsible for the child, and any members of the deceased child's household.

By statute, this report will be forwarded to the social services district, chief county executive officer, chairperson of the local legislative body of the county where the child died and the social services district that had legal custody of the child, if different. Notice of the issuance of this report will be sent to the Speaker of the Assembly and the Temporary President of the Senate of the State of New York.

This report may <u>only</u> be disclosed to the public by OCFS pursuant to section 20(5) of the SSL. It may be released by OCFS only after OCFS has determined that such disclosure is not contrary to the best interests of the deceased child's siblings or other children in the household.

OCFS' review included an examination of actions taken by individual caseworkers and supervisors within the social services district and agencies under contract with the social services district. The observations and recommendations contained in this report reflect OCFS' assessment and the performance of these agencies.

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## Abbreviations

Relationships					
BM-Biological Mother	SM-Subject Mother	SC-Subject Child			
BF-Biological Father	SF-Subject Father	OC-Other Child			
MGM-Maternal Grand Mother	MGF-Maternal Grand Father	FF-Foster Father			
PGM-Paternal Grand Mother	PGF-Paternal Grand Father	DCP-Day Care Provider			
MGGM-Maternal Great Grand Mother	MGGF-Maternal Great Grand Father	PGGF-Paternal Great Grand Father			
PGGM-Paternal Great Grand Mother	MA/MU-Maternal Aunt/Maternal Uncle	PA/PU-Paternal Aunt/Paternal Uncle			
	Contacts				
LE-Law Enforcement	CW-Case Worker	CP-Case Planner			
DrDoctor	ME-Medical Examiner	EMS-Emergency Medical Services			
DC-Day Care	FD-Fire Department	BM-Biological Mother			
CPR-Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation					
	Allegations				
FX-Fractures	II-Internal Injuries	L/B/W-Lacerations/Bruises/Welts			
S/D/S-Swelling/Dislocation/Sprains	C/T/S-Choking/Twisting/Shaking	B/S-Burns/Scalding			
P/Nx-Poisoning/ Noxious Substance	XCP-Excessive Corporal Punishment	PD/AM-Parent's Drug Alcohol Misuse			
CD/A-Child's Drug/Alcohol Use	MN-Medical Neglect	EdN-Educational Neglect			
EN-Emotional Neglect	SA-Sexual Abuse	M/FTTH-Malnutrition/Failure-to-thrive			
IF/C/S-Inadequate Food/ Clothing/ Shelter	IG-Inadequate Guardianship	LS-Lack of Supervision			
Ab-Abandonment	OTH/COI-Others				
	Miscellaneous				
IND-Indicated	UNF-Unfounded	SO-Sexual Offender			
Sub-Substantiated	Unsub-Unsubstantiated	DV-Domestic Violence			
LDSS-Local Department of Social Service	ACS-Administration for Children's Services	NYPD-New York City Police Department			
PPRS-Purchased Preventive Rehabilitative Services		-			

**Case Information** 

**Report Type:** Child Deceased **Jurisdiction:** Suffolk **Date of Death:** 09/07/2014

Age: 4 month(s) Gender: Male Initial Date OCFS Notified: 09/08/2014

#### **Presenting Information**

A report was made to the New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) on 09/07/2014, which alleged Inadequate Guardianship, and Inadequate Food/Clothing/Shelter, against the mother, maternal grandmother and maternal cousin on behalf of the 4-month-old subject child, the 14-year-old male, and 11-year-old female surviving half-siblings, and 3-year-old male surviving sibling. An allegation of DOA/Fatality was also alleged against the mother on behalf of the subject child. The report alleged the mother found the subject child in his bed at approximately 7:30 AM unresponsive, and not breathing. Medical Personnel was called and the subject child was taken to the hospital where he was pronounced dead. The subject child was noted to have been a healthy child and there was no explanation provided for his death. The home was noted to have limited food as there was no refrigerator, stove or electricity.

#### **Executive Summary**

Suffolk County Department of Social Services, (SCDSS), conducted an investigation into the allegations, and coordinated their investigation with law enforcement. Appropriate collateral contacts were made, and pertinent information was obtained. SCDSS contacted medical professionals, first responders, and family members, and offered appropriate services for the family.

All Safety Assessments as well as the Risk Assessment Profile (RAP) were appropriate, timely, and accurately reflected the known circumstances of the case. The family was receptive to bereavement counseling referrals, and accepted aid through the Department of Social Services for funeral expenses for the subject child. Preventive Services as well as Substance Abuse counseling were offered to the family, however declined.

On 11/06/2014, SCDSS made the determination to substantiate the allegations of Inadequate Food/Clothing/Shelter and Inadequate Guardianship listed on the report against the mother, on behalf of the 3-year-old male surviving sibling. The basis for the determination was the condition of the home posing safety hazards to the 3-year-old surviving sibling, given his age and developmental stage. There was a pack of cigarettes, a small bag of marijuana, and a cigarette lighter noted on the night stand next to the bed within the 3-year-old's reach. The nightstand also had a lamp with an exposed bulb that would become very hot to the touch when on. Bottles of bleach were noted to have been on the floor of the home, and a dilapidated latex pool was found in the back yard the step-grandfather tripped over and hurt his leg, that the 3-year-old could have easily gotten trapped under. All other allegations listed in the report were unsubstantiated.

Pediatric records indicated no concerns in regard to the subject child nor the surviving siblings, excluding the 3-year-old's weight in which was addressed with the mother. The Medical Examiner noted the subject child to have been well developed and well-nourished with no identifiable disease processes or significant injuries. The cause of death was determined to have been Sudden Unexplained Infant Death and the manner of death was Undetermined (bed sharing with adult and sibling). The Medical Examiners ruling was not noted in the case record as the case was closed prior to the final autopsy report being issued. The Local Law Enforcement agency's investigation remained open at time the CPS investigation closed pending the final autopsy report. No criminal charges were anticipated.

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### Findings Related to the CPS Investigation of the Fatality

Safety Assessment:		
<ul> <li>Was sufficient information gathered to m the:</li> </ul>	ake the decision recorded on	
<ul> <li>Approved Initial Safety Assessment</li> </ul>	nt?	Yes
<ul> <li>Safety assessment due at the time</li> </ul>		Yes
<ul> <li>Was the safety decision on the approved l appropriate?</li> </ul>	nitial Safety Assessment	Yes
Determination:		
<ul> <li>Was sufficient information gathered to m allegations as well as any others identified investigation?</li> </ul>	` /	Yes, sufficient information was gathered to determine all allegations.
<ul> <li>Was the determination made by the distri appropriate?</li> </ul>	ict to unfound or indicate	Yes
Was the decision to close the case appropriate?		Yes
Was casework activity commensurate with appr regulatory requirements?	·	
Was there sufficient documentation of superviso	ry consultation?	Yes, the case record has detail of the consultation.
Required	Actions Related to the Fatality	
Are there Required Actions related to the compl		
Fatality-Related Info	ormation and Investigative	Activities
	Incident Information	
<b>Date of Death:</b> 09/07/2014	Time of Death: 08:16	AM
County where fatality incident occurred:	SUFFOL	K
Was 911 or local emergency number called?	Yes	
Time of Call:	07:49 AN	1
Did EMS to respond to the scene?	Yes	
At time of incident leading to death, had child us Child's activity at time of incident:	ed alcohol or drugs? No	
⊠ Sleeping □ Workin	g	Driving / Vehicle occupant
☐ Playing ☐ Eating ☐ Other		] Unknown
Did child have supervision at time of incident lea	ding to death? Ves	

old child have supervision at time of incident leading to death? Yes

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How long before incident was the child last seen by caretaker? 3 Hours Is the caretaker listed in the Household Composition? Yes - Caregiver

At time of incident supervisor was: Not impaired.

Total number of deaths at incident event:

Children ages 0-18: 1

#### **Household Composition at time of Fatality**

Household	Relationship	Role	Gender	Age
Deceased Child's Household	Deceased Child	Alleged Victim	Male	4 Month(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Grandparent	No Role	Male	63 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Grandparent	Alleged Perpetrator	Female	57 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Mother	Alleged Perpetrator	Female	33 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Other	Alleged Perpetrator	Female	39 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	Alleged Victim	Male	14 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	Alleged Victim	Female	11 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	Alleged Victim	Male	3 Year(s)
Other Household 1	Father	No Role	Male	47 Year(s)
Other Household 2	Father	No Role	Male	45 Year(s)

#### **LDSS Response**

Suffolk County Department of Social Services, (SCDSS), conducted an investigation into the allegations, and coordinated their investigation with law enforcement. Appropriate collateral contacts were made, and pertinent information was obtained. SCDSS contacted medical professionals, first responders, and family members, and offered appropriate services for the family.

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On 11/06/2014, SCDSS made the determination to substantiate the allegations of Inadequate Food/Clothing/Shelter and Inadequate Guardianship listed on the report against the mother, on behalf of the 3-year-old male surviving sibling. The basis for the determination was the condition of the home posing safety hazards to the 3-year-old surviving sibling, given his age and developmental stage. There was a pack of cigarettes, a small bag of marijuana and a cigarette lighter noted on the night stand next to the bed within the 3-year-old's reach. The nightstand also had a lamp with an exposed bulb that would become very hot to the touch when on. Bottles of bleach were noted to have been on the floor of the home, and a dilapidated latex pool was found in the back yard the step-grandfather tripped over and hurt his leg, that the 3-year-old could have easily gotten trapped under. All other allegations listed in the report were unsubstantiated.

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Pediatric records indicated no concerns in regard to the subject child nor the surviving siblings, excluding the 3-year-old's weight in which was addressed with the mother. The Medical Examiner noted the subject child to have been well developed and well-nourished with no identifiable disease processes or significant injuries. The cause of death was determined to have been Sudden Unexplained Infant Death and the manner of death was Undetermined (bed sharing with adult and sibling). The Medical Examiners ruling was not noted in the case record as the case was closed prior to the final autopsy report being issued. The Local Law Enforcement agency's investigation remained open at time the CPS investigation closed pending the final autopsy report. No criminal charges were anticipated.

#### Official Manner and Cause of Death

Official Manner: Undetermined

**Primary Cause of Death:** Undetermined if injury or medical cause

**Person Declaring Official Manner and Cause of Death:** Medical Examiner

#### Multidisciplinary Investigation/Review

Was the fatality investigation conducted by a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)?No

**Comments:** SCDSS worked in conjunction with Law Enforcement Officials to complete their investigation.

Was the fatality reviewed by an OCFS approved Child Fatality Review Team?No

**Comments:** Suffolk County does not have an approved OCFS Fatality Review Team.

#### **SCR Fatality Report Summary**

Alleged Victim(s)	Alleged Perpetrator(s)	Allegation(s)	Allegation Outcome
017581 - Deceased Child, Male, 4 Mons	017643 - Mother, Female, 33 Year(s)	DOA / Fatality	Unsubstantiated
017581 - Deceased Child, Male, 4 Mons	018001 - Other - Adult Cousin, Female, 39 Year(s)	DOA / Fatality	Unsubstantiated
017581 - Deceased Child, Male, 4 Mons	017584 - Grandparent, Female, 57 Year(s)	DOA / Fatality	Unsubstantiated
017581 - Deceased Child, Male, 4 Mons	017643 - Mother, Female, 33 Year(s)	Inadequate Food / Clothing / Shelter	Unsubstantiated
017581 - Deceased Child, Male, 4 Mons	017643 - Mother, Female, 33 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated
017581 - Deceased Child, Male, 4 Mons	018001 - Other - Adult Cousin, Female, 39 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated
017581 - Deceased Child, Male, 4 Mons	017584 - Grandparent, Female, 57 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated
018002 - Sibling, Male, 3 Year(s)	018001 - Other - Adult Cousin, Female, 39 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated
018002 - Sibling, Male, 3	018001 - Other - Adult Cousin, Female,	Inadequate Food / Clothing /	Unsubstantiated

Year(s)	39 Year(s)	Shelter	
018002 - Sibling, Male, 3	017643 - Mother, Female, 33 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Substantiated
Year(s)			
018002 - Sibling, Male, 3	017643 - Mother, Female, 33 Year(s)	Inadequate Food / Clothing /	Substantiated
Year(s)		Shelter	
018002 - Sibling, Male, 3	017584 - Grandparent, Female, 57	Inadequate Food / Clothing /	Unsubstantiated
Year(s)	Year(s)	Shelter	
018002 - Sibling, Male, 3	017584 - Grandparent, Female, 57	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated
Year(s)	Year(s)		
018003 - Sibling, Male, 14	018001 - Other - Adult Cousin, Female,	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated
Year(s)	39 Year(s)		
018003 - Sibling, Male, 14	017584 - Grandparent, Female, 57	Inadequate Food / Clothing /	Unsubstantiated
Year(s)	Year(s)	Shelter	** 1
018003 - Sibling, Male, 14	017584 - Grandparent, Female, 57	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated
Year(s)	Year(s)	T 1	TT 1 1
018003 - Sibling, Male, 14 Year(s)	017643 - Mother, Female, 33 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated
018003 - Sibling, Male, 14	017643 - Mother, Female, 33 Year(s)	Inadequate Food / Clothing /	Unsubstantiated
Year(s)	01/043 - Mother, Female, 33 Tear(s)	Shelter	Unsubstantiated
018003 - Sibling, Male, 14	018001 - Other - Adult Cousin, Female,	Inadequate Food / Clothing /	Unsubstantiated
Year(s)	39 Year(s)	Shelter	Onsubstantiated
018004 - Sibling, Female, 11	018001 - Other - Adult Cousin, Female,	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated
Year(s)	39 Year(s)		
018004 - Sibling, Female, 11	017584 - Grandparent, Female, 57	Inadequate Food / Clothing /	Unsubstantiated
Year(s)	Year(s)	Shelter	
018004 - Sibling, Female, 11	017584 - Grandparent, Female, 57	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated
Year(s)	Year(s)		
018004 - Sibling, Female, 11	017643 - Mother, Female, 33 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Unsubstantiated
Year(s)			
018004 - Sibling, Female, 11	017643 - Mother, Female, 33 Year(s)	Inadequate Food / Clothing /	Unsubstantiated
Year(s)		Shelter	
018004 - Sibling, Female, 11	018001 - Other - Adult Cousin, Female,	Inadequate Food / Clothing /	Unsubstantiated
Year(s)	39 Year(s)	Shelter	

### **CPS Fatality Casework/Investigative Activities**

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
All children observed?	×			
When appropriate, children were interviewed?	×			
Alleged subject(s) interviewed face-to-face?	×			
All 'other persons named' interviewed face-to-face?	×			

Contact with source?	×		
All appropriate Collaterals contacted?	×		
Was a death-scene investigation performed?	X		
Was there discussion with all parties (youth, other household members, and staff) who were present that day (if nonverbal, observation and comments in case notes)?	X		
Coordination of investigation with law enforcement?	×		
Did the investigation adhere to established protocols for a joint investigation?	X		
Was there timely entry of progress notes and other required documentation?	X		
Additional information: All appropriate collateral contacts were made.			

### **Fatality Safety Assessment Activities**

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Were there any surviving siblings or other children in the household?	$\boxtimes$			
Was there an adequate safety assessment of impending or immediate d in the household named in the report:	langer to su	ırviving sib	lings/other	children
Within 24 hours?	$\boxtimes$			
At 7 days?	$\boxtimes$			
At 30 days?	$\boxtimes$			
Was there an approved Initial Safety Assessment for all surviving siblings/ other children in the household within 24 hours?	X			
Are there any safety issues that need to be referred back to the local district?		X		
				<u> </u>
When safety factors were present that placed the surviving siblings/other children in the household in impending or immediate danger of serious harm, were the safety interventions, including parent/caretaker actions adequate?			X	

### Fatality Risk Assessment / Risk Assessment Profile

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Was the risk assessment/RAP adequate in this case?	×			

During the course of the investigation, was sufficient information gathered to assess risk to all surviving siblings/other children in the household?	×				
Was there an adequate assessment of the family's need for services?	×				
Did the protective factors in this case require the LDSS to file a petition in Family Court at any time during or after the investigation?		X			
Were appropriate/needed services offered in this case	×				
Placement Activities in Response to the Fatal	ity Investigat	ion			

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Did the safety factors in the case show the need for the surviving siblings/other children in the household be removed and placed in foster care at any time during this fatality investigation?		X		
Were there surviving siblings/other children in the household removed as a result of this fatality report/investigation?		X		

### **Legal Activity Related to the Fatality**

Was there legal activity as a result of the fatality investigation? There was no legal activity

### Services Provided to the Family in Response to the Fatality

Services	Provided After Death	Offered, but Refused	Offered, Unknown if Used	Needed but not Offered	Needed but Unavaliable	N/A	CDR Lead to Referral
Bereavement counseling			×				
<b>Economic support</b>						$\boxtimes$	
Funeral arrangements	×						
Housing assistance						×	
Mental health services						×	
Foster care						×	
Health care						×	
Legal services						×	
Family planning						×	
<b>Homemaking Services</b>						×	

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Parenting Skills						X	
<b>Domestic Violence Services</b>						×	
Early Intervention						×	
Alcohol/Substance abuse		X					
Child Care						×	
Intensive case management						×	
Family or others as safety resources						×	
Other		X					
Other, specify: Preventive Services							
Additional information, if necessary:  Bereavement Services, aid with funeral expenses, drug counseling and Preventive services were all offered to the family. SCDSS helped with the expenses of the funeral, and the family was receptive to bereavement services. Drug counseling							

# Were services provided to siblings or other children in the household to address any immediate needs and support their well-being in response to the fatality? Yes

#### Explain:

Bereavement Services, aid with funeral expenses, drug counseling and Preventive services were all offered to the family. SCDSS helped with the expenses of the funeral, and the family was receptive to bereavement services. Drug counseling and Preventive Services were declined by the family, however, as the family felt they did not need them.

# Were services provided to parent(s) and other care givers to address any immediate needs related to the fatality? Yes

and Preventive Services were declined by the family, however, as the family felt they did not need them.

#### Explain:

Bereavement Services, aid with funeral expenses, drug counseling and Preventive services were all offered to the family. SCDSS helped with the expenses of the funeral, and the family was receptive to bereavement services. Drug counseling and Preventive Services were declined by the family, however, as the family felt they did not need them.

### **History Prior to the Fatality**

Child Information		
Did the child have a history of alleged child abuse/maltreatment?	No	
Was there an open CPS case with this child at the time of death?	No	
Was the child ever placed outside of the home prior to the death?	No	
Were there any siblings ever placed outside of the home prior to this child's death	? No	
Was the child acutely ill during the two weeks before death?	No	
·		

#### **Infants Under One Year Old**

During pregnancy, mother:  Had medical complications / infections  Misused over-the-counter or prescription drugs  Experienced domestic violence	<ul><li>☐ Had heavy alcohol use</li><li>☐ Smoked tobacco</li><li>☐ Used illicit drugs</li></ul>				
☑ Was not noted in the case record to have any of the issues listed  Infant was born:  ☐ Drug exposed	☐ With fetal alcohol effects or syndrome				
■ With neither of the issues listed noted in case record  CPS - Investigative History Three Yea	ars Prior to the Fatality				
CIS-Investigative instory Three Tea	is i fior to the Fatanty				
There is no CPS investigative history within three years prior to the fatality.					
CPS - Investigative History More Than Three	Years Prior to the Fatality				
A review of the current system of record indicated the maternal grandmother was named as an alleged subject in 32 prior reports between 1982 and 1992. All of the reports appeared to have been indicated, however it was unclear as to the specific allegations listed and who the case was indicated against as the cases pre-date the conversion to the current system of record. Additional details of the investigations were unavailable.  A case was called in to the SCR on 7/23/2003 alleging Inadequate Food/Clothing/Shelter and Inadequate Guardianship against the mother on behalf of the then 3-year-old male and 3-month-old female surviving siblings, as well as four other children noted as living in the home. During the investigation, the home was raided by the Police for drugs, and arrests were made upon finding marijuana in the home. The mother was not arrested. The home was noted to have been in deplorable condition. The allegations against the mother were indicated and the case remained open for services. The service case did not list the mother, nor her children, however did list the remaining children in the home at the time of the investigation. No one in the current investigation composition was listed on the service case.					
Known CPS History Outside of NYS					
None					
Services Open at the Time of the Fatality					
Required Action(s)					
Are there Required Actions related to compliance issues for provisions of CPS or Preventive services ? □Yes ☑No					
Preventive Services History					
V					

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other children residing in the deceased child's household at the time of the fatality.

There is no record of Preventive Services History provided to the deceased child, the deceased child's siblings, and/or the

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