

Summary Report	Fatality	03/19/2025
-----------------------	-----------------	-------------------

1. Victim: August Walton – 1-year-old male

2. Was the child residing in the child's home or in an out-of-home placement at the time of the fatality?

The child was residing in his home when the following incident occurred:

On June 15, 2023, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the death of 1-year-old August Walton. August was found unresponsive at home by his mother, Lyandra Walton, and was transported to the hospital where he was pronounced deceased. The autopsy determined that August died of fentanyl toxicity. On January 31, 2025, Lyandra Walton pled guilty to manslaughter and child abuse charges in a Maricopa County Superior Court related to August's death.

3. If the victim in the Preliminary Report involved a child residing in the child's home, the following information will be provided:

a. Services being provided to the child, a member of the child's family or the person suspected of the abuse or neglect at the time of the incident and the date of the last contact before the incident between the entity providing services and the person receiving services:

There were no services being provided to the family by the Department of Child Safety at the time of the incident.

b. Was the child, a member of the child's family or the person suspected of the abuse or neglect the subject of a report for investigation at the time of the incident?

No.

c. All involvement of the child's parents and of the person suspected of the abuse or neglect in a situation for which a report for investigation was made or in services provided pursuant to this chapter in the five years preceding the incident:

The child's mother, Lyandra Walton, was involved in the following prior reports:

On February 25, 2007, a report was received alleging neglect to a child by their mother, Lyandra Walton. The family was provided with information on services available in the community. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On January 13, 2009, a report was received alleging neglect to a child by their mother, Lyandra Walton. The allegations were unsubstantiated. The child remained in the hospital and an in-home safety plan for a sibling was developed. The in-home

plan transitioned to an out-of-home dependency in February 2009 for the sibling. In March 2009, a dependency petition was filed with the Maricopa County Superior Court for the newborn upon discharge from the hospital. The Department provided services to the family. Lyandra's parental rights to both children were terminated in August 2009.

On October 11, 2014, a report was received alleging neglect to a child by their mother, Lyandra Walton. The child was removed and a dependency petition was filed with the Maricopa County Superior Court. The Department provided reunification services to the family. Lyandra's parental rights to the child were terminated in 2017 and the allegations of neglect to the child by Lyandra were substantiated.

On March 19, 2022, a report was received alleging neglect to August by his mother, Lyandra Walton. The allegations were unsubstantiated, as the child was determined to be residing in another state. An assessment of child safety was completed by that state's child protection agency.

d. Any investigation pursuant to a report for investigation concerning the child, a member of the child's family or the person suspected of the abuse or neglect or services provided to the child or the child's family since the date of the incident involving the fatality:

The report regarding the fatality was investigated and the case was closed. Lyandra pled guilty to manslaughter and child abuse charges in a Maricopa County Superior Court related to August's death. No subsequent reports of abuse or neglect were received regarding the family.

4. If the victim in the Preliminary Report involved a child residing in an out-of-home placement, the following information will be provided:

a. Licensing Agency:

N/A

b. Licensing history of the out-of-home placement, including the type of license held by the operator of the placement and the period for which the placement has been licensed:

N/A

c. Summary of all violations by the licensee:

N/A

d. Any other actions by the licensee or an employee of the licensee that constitute a substantial failure to protect and promote the health, safety and welfare of a child.

N/A

5. Actions taken by the Department in response to the case including any changes to policy or practice and/or recommendations for further changes in policies, practices, rules or statutes:

The Department conducted a joint investigation with the Phoenix Police Department. There were no other children in the home and the case was closed. Lyandra pled guilty to manslaughter and child abuse charges in a Maricopa County Superior Court related to August's death. No subsequent reports of abuse or neglect were received regarding the family.

Additionally, in accordance with the DCS Strategic Plan for State Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16), multidisciplinary team (MDT) reviews of fatality and near fatality cases were implemented during the first quarter of FY16. The MDT reviews fatality and near fatality cases with prior DCS involvement, which are a key feature of the Strategic Plan and supports the objective of increasing the accuracy of safety and risk assessments in investigations.

Cases are reviewed by the MDT in order to identify any systemic factors, both internal and external to the Department that may have had an impact. The Department uses the aggregate data gathered through all of the MDT reviews to assess and guide future changes and/or recommendations to policies, practices, rules or statutes. Findings from these reviews are compiled into an annual report to be shared on the DCS website. The target date for release of the next report is December 1, 2025.