

Statement on the fatality of a one-month-old boy and the near fatality of his twin brother

Date Issued: March 17, 2021

On January 5, 2020, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the death of a one-month-old boy, Emmanuel Ferguson.

A few hours later on January 6, 2020, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the near death of Emmanuel's twin brother.

Emmanuel was found deceased at his home while in the care of his parents, Donald Ferguson and Emmaline Ramirez. While first responders were on scene, the near fatality victim went into respiratory distress and was taken to the hospital in critical condition.

Mr. Ferguson and Ms. Ramirez were charged with child abuse on January 9, 2020.

The Department removed the other children living in the home including the near fatality victim and placed them in foster care.

The Department filed a dependency petition with the Maricopa County Superior Court on January 9, 2020, and provided services to the family.

On July 10, 2020, the court terminated the parents' rights to the children.

DCS received no prior reports involving Emmanuel Ferguson and the near fatality victim.

DCS received the following prior reports involving Mr. Ferguson and/or Ms. Ramirez:

On June 20, 2008, the Department received a report alleging Mr. Ferguson physically and emotionally abused his child and step-child. The report alleged Mr. Ferguson would hit and verbally abuse the children. The Department's investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On July 21, 2009, the Department received a report alleging Mr. Ferguson physically abused and neglected his child and step-child. The report alleged Mr. Ferguson hit the children while engaged in a domestic violence incident with their mother in a hotel room. The Department's investigation determined that Mr. Ferguson was not living with the children and the mother had an order of protection against him. The Department did not make contact with Mr. Ferguson because he was an over-the-road truck driver. The Department offered services to the mother, but she declined to participate. Since Mr. Ferguson was not living with the children and an order of

Recipient Name

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protection was in place, the Department did not have grounds to remove the children. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On August 11, 2015, the Department received a report alleging neglect to a child by Donald Ferguson and Emmaline Ramirez. The report alleged Mr. Ferguson and Ms. Ramirez were not properly caring for the child since they had been evicted from their home. The DCS investigation determined that Mr. Ferguson and Ms. Ramirez had support from their extended family which provided adequate care and shelter for the child. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On August 31, 2016, the Department received a report alleging Mr. Ferguson and Ms. Ramirez neglected their children. The report alleged the family had been evicted from a hotel where they were living. The Department made numerous attempts to contact the family, but they could not be located. The case was closed on November 18, 2016.

On August 13, 2017, the Department received a report alleging Mr. Ferguson and Ms. Ramirez neglected their children. The report alleged the parents did not provide appropriate care and shelter for the children. The Department made numerous attempts to contact the family, but since they did not have a permanent home or contact information, DCS investigators could not locate the family. The case was closed on October 23, 2017.

On December 1, 2017, the Department received a report alleging Mr. Ferguson physically abused and neglected a child that was living in the home. The report alleged the young child was found alone outside an apartment complex with a bruise on the child's chest. When DCS investigators met with the child later that day, the child did not have any bruises. There was no evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated and case was closed.

On May 28, 2019, the Department received a report alleging Mr. Ferguson and Ms. Ramirez neglected their children. The report alleged the parents' home was unkempt and they were unable to address their children's needs. The investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The family was offered in-home services, but they declined to participate. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.