

Statement on the near fatality of an eight-month-old girl

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On November 3, 2020, the Arizona Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the near fatality of an eight-month-old girl.

The child arrived at the hospital in critical condition with suspicious injuries.

During the investigation, it was learned the child was on a family hunting trip when she was struck with two BBs.

The child's mother, Marticella Lopez-Rodriguez, waited several hours before transporting the child to the hospital for medical care. The mother also reported a false story to police about the injuries being caused by an unknown person shooting at them.

On November 12, 2020, Ms. Lopez-Rodriguez was indicted for aggravated assault, child abuse and evidence tampering.

After the child was released from the hospital, DCS placed the child in foster care.

No other children were living in the home at the time of the incident.

The Department is currently providing services to the family.

DCS has the following history with Marticella Lopez-Rodriguez and/or the near fatality victim:

On April 20, 2015, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Lopez-Rodriguez neglected the near fatality victim's sibling. The report alleged Ms. Lopez-Rodriguez allowed the child to be exposed to illegal drug use in the home and was not properly caring for the child. The DCS investigation found evidence to support the allegations and removed the child from the home. The Department filed a dependency petition and provided services to the family. The allegation was substantiated.

While the dependency was on-going, the Department received another report. On March 28, 2017, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Lopez-Rodriguez neglected her two children. At the time, Ms. Lopez-Rodriguez was having unsupervised weekend visits with the child. The report alleged Ms. Lopez-Rodriguez did not return the child to the child's placement after the weekend visit was completed. The other child was Ms. Lopez-Rodriguez's newborn who was allowed to remain living in the home because the family was close to reunifying. The child was immediately returned to the placement. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the charges. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case remained open while the family continued participating in services.

Recipient Name

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On February 9, 2018, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Lopez-Rodriguez neglected the child that was allowed to continue living in her home. The report alleged the home was unsanitary and Ms. Lopez-Rodriguez was not properly caring for the child. The DCS investigation found evidence to support the allegations. DCS removed the child from the home. The Department filed a supplemental dependency petition and the child was placed in kinship foster care with their sibling, who was already in DCS custody. The allegation of neglect was substantiated. Ms. Lopez-Rodriguez's parental rights were eventually severed to her children.

On February 29, 2020, the Department received a report alleging Ms. Lopez-Rodriguez neglected the near fatality victim. The report alleged Ms. Lopez-Rodriguez was not bonding with the newborn child. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to remove the child. The allegation was unsubstantiated. DCS offered Ms. Lopez-Rodriguez in-home services. She accepted. After she successfully completed services, the case was closed.