

Statement on the death of newborn Emmanuel Bear-Hawk Diaz

Date Issued: June 26, 2024

On November 28, 2022, the Arizona Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the home birth of Emmanuel Diaz, who was unresponsive after birth. The child was transported to the hospital and pronounced deceased shortly after arrival. The Maricopa County Medical Examiner concluded that methamphetamine exposure from maternal methamphetamine use was a contributory cause of death.

There were no other children in the home.

On June 19, 2024, the Department substantiated the allegation of neglect as to Syndi Valdez.

There were no services provided by the Department.

DCS received the following prior reports involving Ms. Valdez:

On October 9, 2018, the Department received a report alleging neglect to a child by Ms. Valdez. The report alleged Ms. Valdez had given birth to a child who was exposed to methamphetamines and THC in utero. The DCS investigation resulted in a safety plan being implemented and in-home services being provided to the family. Ultimately, the child and siblings were taken into DCS custody. The family was provided reunification services. Ms. Valdez did not complete those services and parental rights were terminated. The allegations were substantiated. The dependency matter was ongoing when the next report was received.

On April 13, 2020, the Department received a report alleging neglect to a child by Ms. Valdez. The report alleged Ms. Valdez had given birth to a child who was exposed to amphetamines in utero. The DCS investigation resulted in the child coming into DCS custody. The family was provided reunification services. Ms. Valdez did not complete those services and parental rights were terminated. The allegations were substantiated. The case was closed on November 8, 2021.