

Statement on the death of seven-month-old Brian Mejia

Date Issued: May 10, 2024

On March 31, 2024, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding 7-month-old Brian Mejia who was brought to the hospital by his mother and significant other with no pulse. He was later pronounced deceased at the hospital due to a severe head injury and multiple skull fractures.

There were no other children in the home.

On April 18, 2024, the child's mother, Tina Mejia, and significant other, Jacob Gano, were indicted on charges of first-degree murder and child abuse.

There were no services provided by the Department.

DCS received the following prior reports involving Ms. Mejia:

On September 1, 2023, the Department received a report alleging neglect to the fatality victim by his mother, Tina Mejia. The report alleged the fatality victim was born exposed to amphetamines and methadone at the time of birth. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegation. The family was referred to in-home services with a safety plan in place that included responsible adults. The safety plan was lifted on December 15, 2023, and the case closed on March 13, 2024. The allegations were unsubstantiated.

DCS received the following prior reports involving Mr. Gano:

On December 11, 2022, the Department received a report alleging neglect and physical abuse to a child by Jacob Gano. The report alleged Mr. Gano punched the mother in the face and was making verbal threats. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. No services were offered to the family and the case was closed on February 13, 2023. The allegations were unsubstantiated.

On February 20, 2023, the Department received a report alleging neglect to children by their mother and father, Jacob Gano. The report alleged the mother was stalking Mr. Gano to try and get the children from his care. There were concerns regarding parent's ability to care for the child with concerns of domestic violence and substance use. The DCS investigation did find evidence to support the allegations. The children were taken into DCS custody and a dependency petition was filed. The family was offered reunification services. The children were returned to their mother's care on January 28, 2024, and the dependency was dismissed on March 12, 2024. The allegations were substantiated against both parents.