

Statement on the near-fatality of a 2-month-old female

Date Issued: April 29, 2025

On March 25, 2022, the Department of Child Safety received a report regarding a 2-month-old female who was transported to the hospital by EMS after experiencing a seizure at home. Upon examination, the child was determined to be in critical condition. Hospital evaluations found bruising, a subdural hematoma, and retinal hemorrhaging; these injuries were diagnosed as non-accidental trauma.

Following an assessment of child safety, the child and a sibling were assessed as safe in their mother's care.

On January 13, 2025, the father, Joaquine Martinez Sr., pleaded guilty to one count of child abuse in the Apache County Superior Court related to the child's injuries. On March 25, 2025, the Department substantiated the allegation of physical abuse by Mr. Martinez.

The Department provided services to the family and the case was closed on March 31, 2023. At the time of case closure, the children were in their mother's care and the father was detained.

DCS received the following prior reports involving the mother and Mr. Martinez:

On June 8, 2021, the Department received a report alleging neglect and physical abuse to a child by their mother and their father, Mr. Martinez. The report alleged a history of domestic violence occurring between the parents and recent domestic violence altercations occurring with the child present. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the family was provided information on services available in the community. The case was closed on June 30, 2021.

On October 14, 2021, the Department received a report alleging neglect to a child by their mother and their father, Mr. Martinez. The report alleged a domestic violence incident occurring in which the mother interfered with Mr. Martinez's ability to operate a vehicle; the child was alleged to be in the vehicle during this incident. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the family was provided information on services available in the community. The case was closed on October 28, 2021.