



Edward Coleman
Regional Director

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

(570) 963-4376
Fax (570) 963-3453

OFFICE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES
NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE
Scranton State Office Building
100 Lackawanna Avenue
Scranton, Pennsylvania 18503

REPORT ON THE DEATH

Lorelei Hall

BORN: 02.19.09
DATE OF FATALITY: 04.11.09

FAMILY NOT KNOWN TO:
Lackawanna County Children and Youth Services

February 4, 2010

This report is confidential under the provisions of the Child Protective Services Law and cannot be released.

(23 Pa. C.S. Section 6340)

Unauthorized release is prohibited under penalty of law.

(23 Pa. C.S. 6349 (b))

Reason for Review.

Senate Bill No. 1147, now known as Act 33 was signed by Governor Rendell on July 3, 2008 and went into effect 180 days from that date, December 30, 2008. This Act amends the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) and sets standards for reviewing and reporting child fatality and near child fatality as a result of suspected child abuse. DPW must conduct child fatality and near fatality reviews and provide a written report on any child fatality or near fatality where child abuse is suspected.

1. Family Constellation:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>
Lorelei Hall	Child/Victim	02.19.09

[REDACTED] .88

(of both child/victim and sibling)

Notification of Fatality

On April 11, 2009 the initial referral source to Lackawanna County Children and Youth was [REDACTED] from the Scranton Police Department. Subsequent review by Lackawanna County Children and Youth Service's supervisory staff [REDACTED]. According to the [REDACTED] was brought to the Emergency Room [REDACTED] Hospital by her parents. Child/Victim was pronounced dead on arrival. At the time of the initial medical assessment the death was ruled as Suspicious. The biological father of the Child/Victim [REDACTED] as there were [REDACTED]s related that included the possibility that the father of the Child/Victim may have [REDACTED]" the Child/Victim.

2. Documents Reviewed and Individuals Interviewed:

The Department of Public Welfare, Northeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families conducted a preliminary site record review on 04.13.09 and reviewed [REDACTED] and conducted interviews with the assigned [REDACTED] caseworker and [REDACTED]. A follow up site record review was completed by Northeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families program representative on 05.19.09. The completed [REDACTED] case file was reviewed at this time. An interview with the assigned [REDACTED] intake caseworker was also conducted at this time. As there was no prior case activity with the family there were no additional medical records available for review.

Case Chronology:

04.11.09

Lackawanna County Children and Youth on call supervisor received a [REDACTED] report [REDACTED] the suspicious death of an infant. [REDACTED] of Child/Victim is named as [REDACTED]. Case assigned for immediate response as Child/Victim has a two year old sibling. The case was reassigned to a [REDACTED] caseworker following a review of case with Lackawanna County Children and Youth supervisory staff.

04.11.09

Lackawanna County Children and Youth on call caseworker had an in person contact with Child/Victim's parents, sibling, maternal aunt and maternal uncle at home of maternal aunt and uncle. Safety assessment completed at home of maternal aunt and maternal uncle. This family resource was identified by biological parents of Child/Victim as a potential resource to care for sibling of Child/Victim until outcome of [REDACTED] could be completed. Both biological parents of Child/Victim and maternal aunt and uncle of Child/Victim were in agreement with all terms of safety plan. Pending the outcome of [REDACTED], the maternal aunt and uncle would assume primary responsibility for the sibling of Child/Victim. Sibling of Child/Victim will be cared for at home of maternal aunt and uncle. Emergency clearances completed by on call caseworker.

04.11.09

Collateral contact with Scranton City Detective [REDACTED] and status of criminal investigation. Law enforcement agency has already commenced investigation and does not suspect any negligence or criminal activity at this juncture. Medical consult is preliminary at this point. Law enforcement will await results of autopsy. Family has been cooperative. Law enforcement has no concerns regarding safety of sibling of Child/Victim.

04.13.09

Lackawanna County [REDACTED] intake supervisor reviewed case with assigned caseworker.

[REDACTED] prepared and sent to [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] had collateral contact with investigating officer regarding autopsy and [REDACTED] of case. Autopsy has determined that Child/Victim died of accidental suffocation. There are no issues of concern for law enforcement.

04.14.09

Lackawanna County [REDACTED] intake caseworker prepared and forwarded CY 104.

04.17.09

Collateral contact with biological mother of Child/Victim. Allegations reviewed. Background data secured. The mother indicated that she provided details to investigating law enforcement agency and has no more information to provide.

04.22.09

Lackawanna [REDACTED] had collateral contact with biological father of Child/Victim concerning incident under investigation. Information secured from biological father regarding time line for child care of Child/Victim and specifics of Child/Victim's physical condition on date of incident. The father of Child/Victim indicated that he provided all information to law enforcement agency and he was apprised that case was closed.

04.28.09

Collateral contact with biological parents of Child/Victim. [REDACTED] intake caseworker requested the opportunity to interview both parents in person. Parents indicate that they will discuss information over the phone and will consider at a later date. Parents indicated that law enforcement agency has contacted family and ruled the incident as accidental suffocation and that case is closed. Lackawanna [REDACTED] indicated that [REDACTED] was a [REDACTED] and was separate from the law enforcement agency. [REDACTED]

05.04.09

[REDACTED] intake caseworker had collateral contact with investigating detective at Scranton Police Department. Status of case reviewed. Lackawanna County Children and Youth reviewed the biological parents' refusal to engage in a formal in person interview. Investigating law enforcement will contact biological father and attempt to elicit his willingness to reconsider contact with Children and Youth. Since incident was ruled an accident and parents cooperated fully with law enforcement agency the county child welfare agency had no means to compel further contact with this family.

05.04.09

Supervisory case review with Lackawanna County Children and Youth supervisor. Medical findings reviewed. Law enforcement investigation data reviewed. Case [REDACTED] as there is no medical evidence to indicate that the Child/Victim died as the result of [REDACTED]. Law enforcement has determined that the incident was accidental and closed its criminal investigation.

05.11.09

Lackawanna County Children and Youth [REDACTED] caseworker prepared and sent [REDACTED] Letter to biological father of Child/Victim. Case closed at Lackawanna County Children and Youth.

Previous Children and Youth Involvement:

This family had no record of prior activity with Lackawanna County Children and Youth Services.

Circumstances of the Child's Fatality or Near Fatality:

The Child/Victim was brought to the Emergency Room of Moses Taylor Hospital in Scranton on 04.11.09 following a call from the family. Child/Victim was pronounced dead on arrival at 9:50 a.m. The law enforcement agency was contacted initially and a criminal investigation was commenced immediately. [REDACTED]

Current Status of Case

Lackawanna County Children and Youth Services completed the [REDACTED] on 05.11.09. The case was assigned an [REDACTED]. Scranton Police Department completed its investigation and concluded that Child/Victim died from accidental suffocation. No criminal charges were filed and the case was closed.

Statutory and Regulatory Compliance

- Lackawanna County Children and Youth Services met all regulatory and statutory mandates of The [REDACTED]. All requisite case notes, Safety Assessments and Risk Assessment instruments were completed according to prescribed time frames and regulatory standards. The county agency initiated the [REDACTED] in a timely manner and utilized the support of the local law enforcement agency in a collaborative manner. During the course of the [REDACTED] investigation Lackawanna County Children and Youth Services assured implementation of the safety plan by means of caseworker in-person contact with sibling of Child/Victim at maternal aunt's home.

Findings:

The Department Of Public Welfare, Northeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families case file review and interview of casework, supervisory and administrative staff determined that this case evidenced a scenario where collaboration between the law enforcement agency and the public child welfare contributed to Lackawanna County Children and Youth's ability to investigate this case in a timely manner. The biological parents of the Child/Victim fully cooperated with Emergency Room personnel and the law enforcement agency. Discussions between biological parents and medical personnel included recommendations for appropriate sleep arrangements for infants and toddlers.

Recommendations:

Northeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families Program staff reviewed the collaborative efforts between the local law enforcement agency and the public child welfare agency evidenced in this case with the administrative staff at Lackawanna County Children and Youth Services. The Northeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families support the collaborative efforts and will reinforce the benefits associated with this dialogue between the Children and Youth agency and the Lackawanna County District Attorney's Office.