

PRESS RELEASE

For Release on Wednesday, December 28, 2016

On October 27, 2016, the State's Child Advocate, Jennifer Griffith, announced that she had appointed a panel of community professionals to conduct a multidisciplinary review of the death of a seven month old infant. This child was not in state custody at the time of the fatality, but was previously involved in a case that was open to the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). In addition, the panel was to review the near-fatality of a seven month old child. Unfortunately, prior to the conclusion of this review, the Office of the Child Advocate has received notice of an additional child fatality of a two month old infant. This child was not in state custody at the time of the fatality, however DCYF had prior contact with the family.

The Office of the Child Advocate is issuing this statement to announce that we will be incorporating this third case into our current review, therefore, we will not be concluding the work of the Child Fatality Review Panel at this time. In accordance with a new state law, R.I.G.L. § 42-73-2.3, enacted on July 6, 2016, the Office of the Child Advocate must convene a review panel after notification by DCYF of a child death or near fatality known to the Department. Upon the conclusion of the review of all three cases, the Office of the Child Advocate will issue a public report outlining the panel's findings and recommendations, without identifying the children or families involved in the cases under review.