



**REVIEW OF DEATH OF JEREMIAH RYDER JOHNSON, JR.
OF CLEVELAND COUNTY, OKLAHOMA**
Report Release Date: July 26, 2022

Overview

This review is regarding the death of thirty-two-month-old Jeremiah “Ryder” Johnson Jr. A felony charge of Murder in the First Degree by Permitting Child Abuse was filed by the Cleveland County District Attorney on July 6, 2020, against the biological mother, Rebecca Latane Hogue. On November 4, 2021, this matter came on for Jury Trial. The Jury came back with a verdict of Guilty. On February 15, 2022, Rebecca Latane Hogue was sentenced to Life Imprisonment with all but 16 months in Department of Correction Suspended.

Identifiers:

Child’s Name: Jeremiah “Ryder” Johnson Jr.
Date of Birth: April 18, 2017
Date of Death: January 2, 2020

Person Responsible for the Child (PRFC):
• Rebecca Latane Hogue

Actions

The release of the following summary of the actions taken by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) and the proceedings in the District Court is authorized by 10A O.S. Section 1-6-105.

The OJSO did not become aware of this case until after the death of Jeremiah “Ryder” Johnson Jr.

Child Death Incident

Reportedly, law enforcement contacted the OKDHS to obtain OKDHS records on the mother, Rebecca Hogue’s, boyfriend and notify the OKDHS there had been a child death. It was reported that thirty-two-month-old Jeremiah “Ryder” Johnson Jr. had died. It was reported that law enforcement was contacted by medical professionals who had concerns the death may have resulted from child abuse.

Reportedly, on January 1, 2020, at 10:42 a.m. Rebecca Hogue called 911 and reported her child was cold, blue, and not breathing. Ms. Hogue was walked through Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) by the operator until paramedics arrived and took Ryder to the hospital. Ryder was pronounced dead shortly after arrival. Ryder had substantial bruising on his head and face, bruising on his chin, eye lid, and a crescent shaped bruise all the way around his left ear. Ryder was missing a tooth and a lateral incisor. Ryder had a linear asymmetrical contusion on the left side of his scrotum and had five well-defined

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symmetrical contusions on either side of his spine. Ryder's temperature was 87 degrees at the emergency room (ER). The ER doctor observed petechial hemorrhaging on Ryder's face and eyes.

The OKDHS accepted this report as a Priority I Investigation.

Investigation

The persons interviewed during the investigation included the biological mother, Rebecca Hogue, and various collaterals.

The home consisted of Jeremiah "Ryder" Johnson Jr., biological mother, Rebecca Hogue, and the mother's boyfriend.

Ryder was pronounced dead at the hospital. Law enforcement agencies were investigating the death as a homicide. Ms. Hogue reported she met her boyfriend online in August 2019. The boyfriend began living with Ms. Hogue after he was released from jail sometime around November 2019. The boyfriend mostly watched Ryder while Ms. Hogue worked. Ms. Hogue worked a 40-hour week. Ms. Hogue would sometimes work 11 hour shifts on the weekends and get home around 3:30 a.m. after working a double shift.

Ms. Hogue reported that her boyfriend was very nice and would do things around the house. The boyfriend would fix food for Ms. Hogue and Ryder. Ms. Hogue never believed the boyfriend would harm Ryder. Ms. Hogue stated she had been in abusive relationships in the past and had never seen anything with her boyfriend. Ms. Hogue's boyfriend had stated he would protect her and Ryder.

Ms. Hogue described a trip to the lake on December 15, 2019. During this trip was the first time she noticed any marks or bruises on Ryder after being with her boyfriend. Ryder had a bruise on the inside of his ear. Ms. Hogue's boyfriend said Ryder fell when they were hiking. When questioned about other marks, the boyfriend stated boys get bumps and bruises. On December 18, 2019, Ryder was reported by the boyfriend to have sprayed some of Ms. Hogue's room spray in his eyes. Ryder could not open his eyes. Ms. Hogue took him to seek medical care. "Ryder was described as rambunctious, wild and smart. He loved to play, he loved to take things apart and put things back together, he loved dinosaurs, and Paw Patrol." Ryder was just starting potty training.

Ms. Hogue stated to be cautious, she googled signs of domestic violence because she attracts those kinds of men. Ms. Hogue said she fell for it again because the boyfriend manipulated her. The boyfriend's ex-wife has a protective order against him. The boyfriend stated it was because his ex-wife was jealous that he had a new girlfriend.

Ms. Hogue reported prior domestic violence incidents in previous relationships. Ms. Hogue stated she left Ryder's father when Ryder was two months old and obtained a Victim Protective Order against Ryder's father, because Ryder's father hit her while she was holding Ryder.

The Medical Examiner's (ME) report documented the probable cause of death as blunt force trauma of the head and abdomen and the manner of death as homicide. To be more specific, the ME noted "Blunt Force Trauma of Head with Skull Fracture, Intracranial Hemorrhage, Cerebral Contusion and Swelling. Blunt Force Trauma of the Abdomen with Bowel Contusion, Mesenteric Laceration, Retro-peritoneal

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Hemorrhage, and Hemoperitoneum. Multiple contusions and abrasions.”

An arrest warrant was issued for Ms. Hogue’s boyfriend. However, the boyfriend left the morning of Ryder’s death with no explanation. The boyfriend was later found deceased by suicide. An arrest warrant was also issued for the biological mother, Rebecca Hogue. Ms. Hogue was arrested without incident.

The OKDHS made a Substantiated Finding as to the allegation of Abuse/Death by Ms. Hogue’s boyfriend to Jeremiah “Ryder” Johnson Jr. The OKDHS made a Substantiated Finding as to the allegation of Neglect/Failure to Protect by his mother, Rebecca Hogue.

Prior Involvement of the PRFC with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services

There are two prior reports to the OKDHS which are pertinent to the death report.

The first pertinent report was received on July 10, 2017. The reporter stated the mother, Rebecca Hogue, and Jeremiah “Ryder” Johnson Jr.’s biological father woke up and began arguing. Ryder’s father was alleged to have become physically violent. It was reported Ryder’s father shoved Ms. Hogue while she held two-month-old Ryder. Ms. Hogue called the police and filed an Order of Protection. Ms. Hogue had several injuries to her shoulders, knees, and a laceration to her left arm. Ryder’s father was arrested.

The OKDHS screened out the report and did not accept it for investigation. The OKDHS documented that the new allegations would be added to a pending open report.

The second pertinent report was received on July 10, 2017. The OKDHS addressed allegations of domestic abuse from the above screened out report that was not accepted for investigation. On July 9, 2017, the mother, Rebecca Hogue, left with her two-month-old baby, Jeremiah “Ryder” Johnson Jr. Ms. Hogue was alleged to have stated she would kill herself. Ms. Hogue also stated Ryder’s father did not love Ryder and that she was going to kill Ryder too. A week prior, Ms. Hogue allegedly had cut herself approximately ten times.

The OKDHS made a Substantiated Finding as to allegations of Exposure to Domestic Violence as to Jeremiah “Ryder” Johnson by his biological father. The OKDHS made an Unsubstantiated Finding as to allegations of Threat of Harm, Failure to Protect and Inadequate or Dangerous Housing as to Jeremiah “Ryder” Johnson by his biological mother, Rebecca Hogue.

Judicial Proceedings Prior to the Child’s Death

The OJSO identified no relevant judicial proceeding prior to the death incident.

