



**REVIEW OF THE NEAR DEATH OF L.R.  
DEWEY COUNTY, OKLAHOMA**

**Report Release Date: March 31, 2023**

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**Overview**

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) received a request regarding the near-death of L.R. Two felony counts of Child Abuse and Child Neglect were filed in Dewey County District Court on August 12, 2020, against the biological mother, Nina Rohde, and biological father, James Ramsey. On June 7, 2021, Ms. Rohde pleaded guilty to the child neglect charge. The child abuse charge was dismissed. Ms. Rohde was sentenced on October 18, 2021, to 15 years with the Oklahoma Department of Corrections. The first seven of those years are to be spent in prison. On October 20, 2021, Mr. Ramsey pleaded guilty to the child neglect charge. The child abuse charge was dismissed. Mr. Ramsey was sentenced on February 7, 2022, to 15 years with the Oklahoma Department of Corrections. The first seven of those years are to be spent in prison.

**Identifiers**

Child's Name:	L.R.	Person(s) Responsible for the Child (PRFC):
Age at Time of Incident:	Two Months	• James Matthew Ramsey
Date of Near-Death:	August 9, 2020	• Nina N. Rohde

**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 near-death incident of L.R.

**Near-Death Incident**

On August 9, 2020, the OKDHS was requested to make contact with law enforcement who had responded to a welfare check on L.R. Law enforcement, upon viewing L.R., determined the child to be in severe distress, called for an ambulance and then took L.R. into law enforcement protective custody. The OKDHS documented that hospital staff determined L.R. to be suffering from severe, life-threatening malnourishment and failure to thrive. The OKDHS further documented that due to healing bruises on the child's head, the attending physician noted possible child abuse. L.R. was then airlifted to a hospital that could render a higher level of care where it was discovered that the child had a broken right arm and right leg, was in renal failure, and exhibited seizure-like activity.

The OKDHS accepted the report as a Priority I investigation, to be initiated by August 9, 2020. The OKDHS initiated contact with the child and family on August 9, 2020.



## Investigation

The persons interviewed during the investigation include the biological parents, law enforcement, medical professionals, and various personal collaterals of the family.

While investigating the report, which initially alleged Neglect/Failure to Thrive, the OKDHS documented that two-additional allegations of Abuse/Other and Neglect/Near-Death were to be added to the report. The OKDHS documented that during interviews with law enforcement, both parents produced letters of apology to L.R. and admitted the roles they played in the neglect and abuse of L.R.

It was documented that Ms. Rohde admitted to roughly grabbing L.R. by the arm and leg while cleaning the child's diaper. It was further documented that Ms. Rohde admitted to "flicking" L.R. with her finger on the head and the bottoms of the child's feet. The OKDHS documented that Mr. Ramsey admitted to "flicking" L.R. also, as well as tossing L.R. with force, at times into the bassinet. The OKDHS further documented that Mr. Ramsey stated he and Ms. Rohde would forget to feed L.R. because they were "busy playing video games, watching T.V., having intercourse or smoking marijuana".

The OKDHS made a Substantiated Finding of Neglect/Near-Death of L.R. by both James Ramsey and Nina Rohde. The OKDHS made a Substantiated Finding of Neglect-Failure to Thrive of L.R. by both James Ramsey and Nina Rohde. The OKDHS further made a Substantiated Finding of Abuse-Other to L. R. by both James Ramsey and Nina Rohde.

It was documented that due to both parents admitting responsibility for L.R.'s injuries, the OKDHS recommended that the rights of both of L.R.'s parents be terminated as the abuse and neglect were shocking and heinous. Upon the request of the OKDHS, on August 10, 2020, L.R. was placed into emergency custody of the OKDHS. On September 10, 2020, the Citizen Potawatomi Nation (Tribe) moved the Court to transfer the matter of L.R. to the tribal court. On January 20, 2021, the case was officially transferred to the tribal court. On August 24, 2021, the Tribe gave notice to the OKDHS that the case had closed due to the adoption of L.R.

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

The OJSO identified one pertinent report of child abuse prior to the near-death incident of two-month-old L.R.

The first pertinent report was received on July 1, 2020. The OKDHS received a report that one-week-old L.R. was in the hospital with the mother, Nina Rohde. Ms. Rohde. was alleged to be complaining to hospital staff that the child was screaming and unable to be consoled. Hospital staff noted that Ms. Rohde had taken Zoloft throughout her pregnancy and the child seemed to be exhibiting signs of withdrawal. Hospital staff further noted there was a concern for possible previous drug use.

The report was accepted as a Priority One Investigation, to be initiated by July 1, 2020.

The OKDHS initiated contact with the family on July 1, 2020.

During the investigation, the OKDHS documented that there were concerns about the parents being so young and that their support system, a relative who also lived on the property, had a history of drug use. The OKDHS documented that hospital staff was concerned about the baby exhibiting withdrawal symptoms and that Ms. Rohde was on a low-dose prescription at the time of birth. The OKDHS further documented that Ms. Rohde admitted to being overwhelmed, having "first baby jitters" and did not want to accidentally hurt her baby. The OKDHS documented that the child's cord blood test was positive for cannabinoids. The OKDHS further documented that according to hospital staff, the amount of cannabinoids shown in the test result indicated that Ms. Rohde had ingested a small amount of a marijuana product several months prior to L.R.'s, birth. The

OKDHS further documented that the child's doctor had no concerns for L.W., but advised the family to seek help if they felt overwhelmed.

The OKDHS made an Unsubstantiated Finding of Abuse-Threat of Harm of L.R. as to both parents, James Ramsey and Ms. Nina Rohde, and did not request that a deprived petition be filed.

### **Judicial Proceedings Prior to the Child's Death Incident**

The OJSO identified no relevant judicial proceedings prior to the near-death incident.