



BCPO News

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March 21, 2019

Delran Woman Sentenced for Accidentally Smothering Infant Son

Burlington County Prosecutor Scott Coffina announced that a Delran woman who fatally smothered her infant son after consuming a large amount of alcohol was sentenced today to four years in New Jersey state prison.

Under an agreement with the Prosecutor's Office, Melissa Johnson, 39, pled guilty to Endangering the Welfare of a Child (Second Degree) in exchange for the sentence, which was handed down by the Hon. Philip E. Haines, J.S.C.

Paramedics were dispatched to the defendant's home on February 18, 2015, for a report of an unresponsive child. The investigation revealed that a relative arriving at the house found Johnson asleep on the couch with her 3-month-old son partially wedged underneath her.

The investigation further revealed that the defendant had been consuming alcohol for several hours prior to being discovered. Burlington County Medical Examiner Dr. Ian Hood concluded that the infant died as a result of being accidentally asphyxiated.

"This is a heartbreaking and tragic occurrence for everybody involved," Prosecutor Coffina said. "But justice demands accountability for such actions, and in this case that includes a sentence involving incarceration."

The investigation was conducted by the Prosecutor's Office and the Delran Police Department.

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