



BCPO News



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June 27, 2024

Philadelphia Woman Charged in Overdose Death of Infant Son

Burlington County Prosecutor LaChia L. Bradshaw and Medford Township Police Chief Arthur E. Waterman announced that a 32-year-old Philadelphia woman has been charged with causing the death of her 10-month-old son through exposure to an illicit drug.

Vanessa Hampton, of the Frankford section of the city, was charged with Manslaughter (Second Degree) and Possession of a Controlled Dangerous Substance (Third Degree). She was taken into custody last week in Philadelphia and is awaiting extradition to New Jersey.

The investigation began in November 2022 after officers from the Medford Township Police Department were called to a residence for a report of an unresponsive infant. He was taken to Virtua Hospital in Voorhees and then transferred to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. He failed to regain consciousness and was declared deceased approximately one week later.

An autopsy performed by the Philadelphia Medical Examiner's Office ruled the death a homicide, concluding that the infant died from drug intoxication after being exposed to Xylazine. Xylazine is widely used in veterinary medicine as a sedative, muscle relaxant, and analgesic. In the United States, it is not approved for human consumption or medical treatment.

Based on the investigation, it is alleged that Hampton was responsible for exposing her child to the drug, which resulted in his death after being ingested.

The homicide investigation was conducted by members of the Medford Township Police Department Criminal Investigations Bureau and the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office. Hampton will be prosecuted by Assistant Prosecutor Jamie Hutchinson.

All persons are considered innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

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2024-17