

Mother charged with manslaughter after 3-year-old boy's fentanyl overdose in West St. Paul

Complaint did not say how child ingested the drug.

By [Paul Walsh](#) Star Tribune

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Dakota County jail
Queenetta McDaniel

A 3-year-old boy's death is being blamed on a fentanyl overdose that occurred in a West St. Paul apartment where the child and his mother were staying with a dealer, according to charges filed against the woman.

Queenetta J. McDaniel, 34, of Maplewood, was charged Wednesday in Dakota County District Court with second-degree manslaughter in connection with the death of the boy on Dec. 7, 2020.

McDaniel remains jailed Friday in lieu of \$250,000 bail. Court records do not list an attorney for her. She is due in court on May 5.

According to the criminal complaint:

Police and emergency medical providers were summoned to the apartment around 7:40 a.m. McDaniel said she awoke and noticed that the boy had vomited and was not breathing. She said he had been fine up to 11 p.m., when he went to sleep.

The boy, whose name was not disclosed in the charging document, was taken by ambulance to a hospital and died there soon after.

That same day, police suspected that McDaniel might be under the influence of drugs, and they collected a blood sample for testing. It revealed fentanyl in her system.

Witnesses told police that McDaniel was a "heavy and habitual user of illicit drugs, including fentanyl, at the time of the [boy's] death," the complaint read.

The Ramsey County Medical Examiner's Office determined the boy died from a fentanyl overdose. The complaint did not specify how the boy ingested the potent opioid.

McDaniel and her son had been staying at the apartment for a couple of days. Investigators learned that a resident had been selling fentanyl and other illicit drugs out of the home. A law enforcement search of the unit turned up drug paraphernalia in a bedroom and a bathroom.

Paul Walsh is a general assignment reporter at the Star Tribune. He wants your news tips, especially in and near Minnesota.

St. Paul parents charged after their 1-year-old child died from fentanyl toxicity

Jasmine Ryan and Jeffrey Weidell were both charged after their 1-year-old child ingested fentanyl on Dec. 25, 2024, according to court documents.



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ST PAUL, Minn. — Two people have been charged with second-degree manslaughter in connection to their toddler's death on Christmas Day.

Jasmine Ryan and Jeffrey Weidell are both charged with second-degree manslaughter – culpable negligence creating unreasonable risk after their 1-year-old child ingested fentanyl on Dec. 25, 2024, according to court documents.

Police were called to a home on the 1000 block of 5th Street East in St. Paul on a report of an unresponsive child who had been exposed to fentanyl. When officers arrived, they found Ryan performing CPR on a 1-year-old who was unconscious and not breathing.

Ryan told police that the toddler had ingested fentanyl, adding that she administered Narcan to the child before they arrived. Police found pieces of crumpled tinfoil with suspected drug residue on the couch.

The 1-year-old was transported to Regions Hospital but died shortly after arriving. The final autopsy determined that the cause of death was fentanyl toxicity.

According to the criminal complaint, Ryan told investigators that the 1-year-old was playing with toys around 1 p.m. before she took a shower. After about a half-hour, Ryan said she went to the living room and saw the 1-year-old lying on Weidell's chest. After going to the kitchen briefly, Ryan returned to the living room where the toddler was facedown on the couch. She said Weidell was standing and looking at the boy.

Ryan told police that Weidell had noticed the toddler's lips were blue, so she told Weidell to call 911. Ryan said she began CPR and told police she believed the 1-year-old was exposed to fentanyl. According to court documents, Ryan said Weidell's friend had come over earlier and left fentanyl in the house. Ryan also admitted to smoking fentanyl the night prior. Ryan told authorities that Weidell also smoked in the past, however, Weidell said he no longer does. Before Weidell was taken to a squad car, police found "several" pieces of crumpled-up tinfoil in his pockets and bag from his wallet that tested positive for the presence of methamphetamine.

When investigators interviewed Weidell, he told them he fell asleep on the couch between midnight and 2 a.m. on Dec. 25. When he awoke, the boy wasn't responsive. When asked why the toddler stopped breathing, Weidell said he "got ahold of fentanyl." He denied using drugs but said Ryan used fentanyl, including during her pregnancy with their most recent child, a 1-month-old who was in a pack-and-play in the living room when police arrived.

According to court documents, Weidell said the 1-month-old was born with fentanyl in their system. The baby went through withdrawal, Weidell said, and had to be on medication. The couple had a third child living with them who was also under the age of 6. Both children were taken to the hospital for medical evaluation and were later placed in child protection, according to the criminal complaint.

Both Ryan and Weidell face a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison.