

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.