The City *of*
SAN DIEGO
Police Department

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Arrests Made in Child Neglect Homicide Investigation

San Diego – A lengthy investigation into the death of a 16-month-old child has resulted in the arrest of both of his parents.

On November 6, 2024, at 11:40 a.m., the San Diego Police Communications Center received a call from the mother of a 16-month-old child reporting her son was unresponsive and not breathing at 10936 Evening Creek Drive, San Diego. Officers from Northeastern Division responded and met with fire and paramedics who also responded. The child was quickly transported to Pomerado Hospital in Poway, but unfortunately was pronounced deceased at 12:32 p.m.

During the preliminary investigation, it was determined the child, who was severely underweight, appeared malnourished and was possibly the victim of criminal neglect. Detectives from the San Diego Police Department Child Abuse Unit began an investigation into determining who was responsible for the care and custody of the 16-month-old child.

Based on Child Abuse's initial investigation and the severity of the apparent neglect to the child, the San Diego Police Department Homicide Unit responded to investigate.

Throughout the investigation, the San Diego Police Department Homicide Unit and Child Abuse Unit worked closely with the Medical Examiner's Office, the District Attorney's Office, and Doctors at Rady Children's Hospital and determined the juvenile had been the victim of severe neglect over a lengthy period of time, ultimately leading to his death. The investigation also led investigators to believe the child's father, Jamar Branch (39-year-old), and mother, Helena Branch (37-year-old), were ultimately responsible for the criminal neglect.

On February 19, 2025, Jamar and Helena Branch were located at 2851 Meadow Lark Drive in San Diego, and were arrested for the murder of their son.

The child is described as a 16-month-old Black male juvenile. His name was Benjamin Branch.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is encouraged to call the Homicide Unit at (619) 531-2293 or Crime Stoppers at (888) 580-8477.

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