



Middlesex County Prosecutor's Office

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News Release

Date: March 29, 2024

A Child's Death and an Act of Aggravated Arson under investigation

Middlesex County Prosecutor Yolanda Ciccone and Chief Daniel Plumacker of the Sayreville Police Department announced today that a child's death and an act of aggravated arson is under investigation in the Borough of Sayreville.

On March 28, 2024, at approximately 10:45 P.M., authorities received a 911 call reporting a fire on the area of Sayreville High School, while responding to the call an additional call came in reporting a related domestic dispute. Authorities then responded to Eisenhower Drive in the Borough of Sayreville, upon their arrival, officers located a female victim, who alerted the authorities of a domestic dispute that led to Manuel Rivera, 43, of Sayreville, leaving the home with their 9-year-old son.

Authorities on scene at Washington Road, near the rear of Sayreville High School, found Rivera alive but with burns to his body and a self-inflicted wound. Next to Rivera a vehicle was located that was doused with gasoline and on fire. Rivera was transported to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital where he is being treated for his injuries.

Initial investigation has revealed that the body of a deceased child was found in the vehicle. Rivera has been charged with second-degree Aggravated Arson. Additional charges are pending the autopsy report from the Middlesex County Medical Examiner.

Anyone with information or surveillance footage of the area is asked to call Detective Michael Pirigy of the Sayreville Police Department at 732-727-4444 or Detective Jose Rosario of the Middlesex County Prosecutor's Office at 732-745-3289.

Note to editors: Questions may be directed Public Information Officer, Brynn Krause mcpopress@co.middlesex.nj.us.