

## **Mom deserted 3rd child - Beauty parlor mother left baby with adoption agency for 53 days in 2000, prosecutors say**

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PONTIAC -- A 25-year-old mother who dodged murder charges in the heat-exposure deaths of her two children abandoned a third child at a local adoption agency for nearly two months, Oakland County Prosecutor David Gorcyca said.

The prosecutor's office was told on Monday by the Family Independence Agency that **Tarajee S. Maynor** gave birth to a child in November 2000 and left the baby at Bethany Christian Services, a private adoption agency in Madison Heights, for 53 days.

Gorcyca said he has no further details on the matter, including what happened to the baby after 53 days or where the baby is now. His office, after trying to obtain records from the state agency and the adoption agency, has decided to subpoena the records to get the details.

"I'm not going to play around any more. I want the legal records, and I want them now," Gorcyca said. **Maynor** 's attorney, Elbert Hatchett, was unavailable for comment Thursday, his office said.

On Wednesday, 46th District Court Judge Stephen C. Cooper reduced **Maynor** 's charges from felony murder to involuntary manslaughter. Police officers testified that **Maynor** said she was "too stupid" to know her children, Adonnis, 3, and Acacia, 10 months, would die after being locked in her closed Dodge Neon for nearly four hours June 28. Felony murder is punishable by up to life prison involuntary manslaughter carries a maximum of 15 years in prison on each count.

Assistant Prosecutor Marc Barron did not inform Judge Cooper of the new development because his office did not have documentation of the 2000 abandonment, Gorcyca said. Until prosecutors have documentation, the information would be considered hearsay in court and would be inadmissible.

"Marc can't just stand up and say it. We need someone to testify and (the) records," Gorcyca said.

Once prosecutors get more documentation about the abandonment of the baby, they would likely use that information at trial to show what **Maynor** 's intent may have been with the two children who died in her care, Chief Deputy Prosecutor Deborah Carley said.

"It is an important thing to look at about her," Carley said. "Did she not want that child? That could go to her motive and intent in this case with these children and whether she wanted them. It also goes to her ability to parent and her intent and how she cared for these children on a daily basis."

The case worker from the Family Independence Agency told prosecutors that **Maynor**, who is now pregnant, gave birth to a child after Adonnis and before Acacia and turned the baby over to the private agency for adoption.

**Maynor** did not sign the necessary paperwork terminating her parental rights and left the child at the agency for 53 days, prosecutors were told. The child's gender and age is unknown.

Dawn Dean, spokeswoman for Bethany Christian, said privacy rules prevent her from saying whether **Maynor** dropped off a baby for adoption.

Under the adoption agency's rules, if a woman refuses to terminate her rights on paper or return to pick up her child after 90 days, the agency makes every attempt to find the mother before making the child a ward of the state and placing it up for permanent adoption, Dean said.

"We are obligated by law to follow this person (the mother). We would go find that person, be after that person and not let up," Dean said.

After that, the child would become a ward of state, and the agency would begin permanent adoption proceedings.

Prosecutors also have said that if **Maynor**, who is pregnant with her fourth child, gives birth in the county, they will seek to have her parental rights terminated.

Prosecutors are still trying to obtain documents from the Wayne County offices of the Family Independence Agency related to a visit case workers reportedly made to the **Maynor** home in Detroit to check on the children. No action was taken after the visit, but Carley wants to know why investigators were sent to the home.

Part of the problem with obtaining documents from state agencies like FIA is that county branches of the agencies do not talk to each other, Carley said.

"We can't pick up the phone and say Oakland get a report from Wayne. We've put a request into FIA in Wayne County and Bethany Christian."

Caption: **TarajeeMaynor**, charged with involuntary manslaughter of her two children, is said to have abandoned a third child at an adoption agency. At right is **Maynor**'s attorney, Elbert Hatchett. Deborah Carley, chief deputy prosecutor

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