

UPDATE: Jersey County State's Attorney answers questions on Monday's child abuse charges

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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JERSEYVILLE - New details are emerging from charges filed Monday afternoon against Mike and Georgina Roberts, both 42, of Jerseyville, Illinois.

The couple was charged with one count of first-degree murder, and two counts of endangering the life and health of a child after Mike Roberts' biological son, Liam, who lived with the couple, was pronounced dead on arrival at Jersey Community Hospital, weighing only 17 pounds at the time. His older brother, who is seven, is currently in stable condition, after being admitted to the ICU for extreme malnutrition.

In the allegation, provided to Riverbender.com by Jersey County State's Attorney Ben Goetten, the couple is accused of carrying out abuse against Liam Roberts from Dec. 2015 - Nov. 3, 2017, when the child was pronounced dead.

According to the allegations, authorities have accused Mike and Georgina Roberts of allowing Liam Roberts to become "extremely malnourished" "knowingly and intentionally," through acts of both commission and omission, which "allowed their son to starve to death"

The charges also state the couple "knowingly withheld food and nourishment on a regular and constant basis," causing both Liam Roberts and his brother, identified as A.P. R. in the allegations, to fall into conditions of being severely malnourished.

Bail for the couple was set at \$500,000.

Liam Roberts and A.P.R. were not the only children residing in their home, however. Goetten confirmed six children lived within the household, and the surviving members of the family not currently hospitalized were put into the care of the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS), and may have been placed with other relatives at this time, Goetten said.

Goetten could not confirm reports given to Riverbender.com by family members of the surviving children claiming DCFS had intervened regarding the children's conditions.

Neither the Jerseyville DCFS office nor the school district could confirm this at this time. Calls to DCFS were forwarded to its media office in Northern Illinois, and the district said the superintendent would not be available until Monday morning.

When asked if other signs of abuse were present outside of being "extremely malnourished" and deprived of food, Goetten said he had no knowledge of further abuse at this time, but promised to file additional charges if/when further evidence is provided.

Goetten said he is currently awaiting an autopsy report detailing the exact cause of death for Liam Roberts from Jersey County Coroner Larry Alexander. Alexander previously forwarded all calls regarding this matter to the Jerseyville Police Department. Goetten said he had "no timeline for the official autopsy report" in an email Wednesday afternoon.