

TOP STORY

## Judge denies bond for man held in overdose death of 6-year-old

Keith Epps

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A Spotsylvania County man charged in connection with the December overdose death of a 6-year-old girl was denied bond Monday.

Jonathan Copenhaver, 37, was in Spotsylvania Circuit Court seeking to reverse prior bond denials. He and the child's mother, Cera Harper, are both being held in the Rappahannock Regional Jail on two counts of child neglect and possession of illegal drugs.

The child was found dead the morning of Dec. 16 at the home of Harper and Copenhaver on Sunburst Lane. A medical examiner determined that her cause of death was fentanyl poisoning.

Defense attorney Alex Raymond on Monday tried to shift the blame away from Copenhaver. He said that Copenhaver left the home the previous night after getting into an argument with Harper.

He said the child was fine when he left. "He left the child alone with her mother and he doesn't know how she got into any drugs," Raymond said.



Copenhaver

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He said Copenhaver is not a flight risk and has not been convicted of a crime since 2008.

Prosecutor Susie Brock said fentanyl tablets and methamphetamines were found during a search of the home and argued that Copenhaver's night away does not absolve him of responsibility.

Brock said there was a 5-month-old child in the home as well who fortunately was not capable of getting into drugs that had been "carelessly" left out.

Judge Ricardo Rigual denied the bond request.

A preliminary hearing for Copenhaver and Harper is scheduled for April 28 in Spotsylvania Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court.

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**By Keith Epps**

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