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Flint Township parents charged with murder, torture in death of 7-year-old son

Prosecutors say child was 255 pounds at his death



The Genesee County Prosecutor explains why parents have been charged after their 7-year-old son died.





GENESEE COUNTY, Mich. (WNEM) - Two Flint Township parents are charged with several felonies for the death of their 7-year-old son.

Damien and Jessica O'Brien were charged on June 23 with second degree murder, torture, and multiple child abuse charges.



Damien and Jessica O'Brien are charged with second degree murder, torture, and multiple child abuse charges. (Genesee County Sheriff's Office)

According to a complaint from the Genesee County Prosecutor's Office, the O'Brien's are accused of causing serious physical harm to their child, Casper, who weighed 255 pounds at his death, and was immobile.

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Two Flint Township parents are charged with several felonies for the death of their 7-year-old son, Casper. (Obituary - Sharp Funeral Homes)

The parents are accused of not taking him to the doctor, and failing to provide a safe environment prior to his death.

Paramedics find distressed and immobile Casper in a hording situation

The prosecutor's office said law enforcement began investigating the parents on Nov. 4, 2025. Paramedics were called to the Flint Township home that day after a 9-1-1 caller reported that a child was having difficulty breathing.





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Paramedics found Casper distress; he was extremely overweight and unable to move. He died that night.

Leyton said the autopsy shows he died of dilated cardiomyopathy, a heart muscle disease, with morbid obesity being a contributing factor.

“What we allege is that he was not fed in a nutritious way,” said Leyton. “He was neglected and he was abused and his diet is part of it, and not getting whatever help he needed because he was nonverbal as part of it. All that adds up to an extreme case of child abuse resulting in someones death.”

Court records show the couple are also charged with second degree child abuse in the presence of another child who was 5-years-old. According to complaint, the girl was also morbidly obese found dirty, with knots in her hair and was found naked outside by law enforcement.

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Leyton shared some of the evidence his team plans to use in the case.

“We’ll present the body camera footage,” said Leyton. “We’ll present the autopsy results. We’ll present the fact that this child died from fairly natural causes brought on by the obesity and the lack of nutrition. Uh, and we’ll present what we think as a case of, of neglect and abuse and torture.”

If the O’Briens are convicted on these charges, they could each face life in prison.





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Prosecutor says they took care of their pet but not their children

Leyton said what is baffling in this case is that the father had a good job with good health insurance, yet Casper was only taken to the doctor once.

However, Leyton said the family dog was taken to the vet.

“They had called the veterinarian about one of their pets, they knew what to do for the dog, but they didn’t do it for their own child,” said Leyton. “Sadly, he died because of neglect.”

Leyton also said the children did not go to school. The area school district, Child Protective Services and police were unaware of the children.

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“This is an extraordinarily tragic set of facts,” said Leyton. “It’s been very hard for me and my staff to review this, it’s tough on Flint Township Police, it’s tough on CPS, but these are the jobs we have.”

The O’Briens are expected back in court for a probable cause conference on July 2.

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