

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, September 22, 2026

CONTACT: Acting Lieutenant Christopher Leahy at cleahy@pd.sandiego.gov

Infant Death Investigation Underway in Mission Valley West

San Diego – The San Diego Police Department’s Homicide and Child Abuse Units are investigating the suspicious death of a 7-month-old baby girl.

On September 21, 2026, at 6:34 p.m., San Diego Police Dispatch received a 9-1-1 call from the infant’s father reporting that his 7-month-old daughter was unresponsive and not breathing inside the family’s apartment located in the 1400 block of Hotel Circle North in the Mission Valley West neighborhood of San Diego.

Officers from Western Division, along with paramedics from San Diego Fire-Rescue, responded and performed life-saving measures on the infant. The infant was transported to Rady Children’s Hospital but died shortly after midnight, September 22.

Findings during medical treatment and evaluation of the infant revealed significant trauma to the infant, thus prompting a pediatric death investigation by the San Diego Police Department’s Child Abuse and Homicide Units.

The preliminary investigation indicates the infant died at the hands of another person. The infant’s father, identified as 38-year-old Rafael Santos, was subsequently arrested and booked into San Diego County Jail for murder and child abuse causing death.

Investigators will continue working closely with the Medical Examiner’s Office to determine the cause and manner of death.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is encouraged to call SDPD’s Homicide Unit at (619) 531-2293 or Crime Stoppers at (888) 580-8477.

###