

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE



ROBERT CALARCO, PRESIDING OFFICER

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Legislators

FROM: Robert Calarco, Presiding Officer
Suffolk County Legislature

DATE: March 10, 2020

SUBJECT: **Special Legislative Committee**

Pursuant to the oversight authority conveyed on the Legislature pursuant to Section C2-8 of the SUFFOLK COUNTY CHARTER and Section 209 of New York State County Law, I hereby convene a Special Legislative Committee to investigate the untimely death of Thomas Valva on January 17, 2020 and the County's involvement with the Zubko-Valva, Valva and Pollina families prior to, during and immediately after his death.

The Committee shall be comprised of the following 3 legislators: Presiding Officer Calarco, who shall serve as Chairman, Deputy Presiding Officer Hahn and Minority Leader Cilmi. The purpose of the committee shall be to conduct a thorough fact-finding on the circumstances regarding this tragedy, the County's involvement with these families and develop recommendations to ensure that such an incident does not occur in the future. The members of the committee shall determine its rules and procedures with respect to its operations separate and apart from the standing Rules of the Legislature.

The County Department of Social Services ("the Department") is bound by New York State Social Services Law. Generally, the Department is limited in what it can discuss pursuant to Social Services Law § 422. However, notwithstanding other inconsistent provisions of law, State Social Services Law § 422-a allows for the commissioner of a local department of social services to provide additional information on child protective services cases in certain circumstances, including cases where a child fatality occurs. I look forward to working with my fellow legislators to obtain as much information as possible to fully understand what occurred in this case and develop solutions to prevent such a tragedy from happening again in Suffolk County.