

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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Attorney General



INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

2026

Incident Type: Sudden Death

Incident Location: East Providence, RI

Incident Date: On or about March 7, 1993

Police Dept: East Providence

On March 7, 1993, Lori Lee Mariano, also known as Lori Malloy (Ms. Malloy), was found dead in her East Providence home. At the time she was found, there were no signs of forced entry into the apartment, no obvious signs of trauma, nor were any items missing. An autopsy concluded that the death was due to natural causes. The police classified the death as a “sudden death” and closed the case.

In June 2022, at the request of Ms. Malloy’s daughter, Lauren Malloy, the Rhode Island Office of Attorney General (RIAG) agreed to re-investigate the circumstances surrounding her mother’s death. The Office’s more than three-year investigation included interviews with over a dozen witnesses, including Lauren Malloy, other family and friends of Ms. Malloy, and police officers previously assigned to the case, as well as a review of records obtained from the police, the medical examiner, and other sources. The RIAG also arranged for the exhumation and examination of Ms. Malloy’s remains and DNA analysis by a private forensic laboratory.

As described below, based on the available information, the RIAG concludes that currently there is no evidence establishing Ms. Malloy’s death as a homicide.

INITIAL EAST PROVIDENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT INVESTIGATION (1993)

On Sunday, March 7, 1993, around 1:00 PM, ██████████ contacted the East Providence Police to request a well-being check on his girlfriend, Ms. Malloy, whom he had not seen in approximately one week. ██████████ told police that after not hearing from Ms. Malloy for several days, he went to her apartment and observed human hair scattered in clumps throughout the residence. Frightened, he left and went to the police department. After speaking with ██████████, police went with him to Ms. Malloy’s home at 136 N. Hull Street, 3rd floor, East Providence, where they discovered her body on the bathroom floor. She appeared to have been deceased for some time.

Detectives arrived soon thereafter and seized evidence, including the clumps of hair described by ██████████, which were found scattered across the apartment. Police also found long strands of hair wrapped around the decedent’s wrist and woven between her toes and fingers. Additionally, officers noted that the bathroom sink was still running and the refrigerator was pulled out from its usual spot and unplugged. A loaf of bread had been opened, with slices removed and scattered throughout the apartment and near Ms. Malloy’s body, with one slice partially eaten. There were no signs of forced entry nor any obvious signs of trauma. Ms. Malloy was officially pronounced dead at 2:37 PM by the Rhode Island Medical Examiner.

Police investigated the case as a “sudden death.” Police interviewed witnesses, collected evidence, and documented the scene; their investigation did not reveal any signs of trauma or any indication of foul play. In the original autopsy report, Rhode Island State Medical Examiner Dr. Richard J. Evans described the decedent as a thirty-year-old female with a “history of cocaine abuse and a history of schizophrenia treated with Lithium and Mellaril” and noted that she “had had a several days history of flu-like symptoms and was not feeling well.” The autopsy report determined that the death was “natural” identifying the cause as “hypertrophic cardiomyopathy,” a thickening of the heart muscle impairing the ability of the heart to pump blood. According to

the Mayo Clinic, hypertrophic cardiomyopathy can lead to heart disease and can cause fainting, and in some cases, sudden cardiac death. The autopsy report did not note any injuries or trauma to Ms. Malloy's body. Additionally, while the original toxicology report did not find heightened levels of illegal substances, it should be noted that in the early 1990s, toxicology panels did not include all the substances for which current labs would screen. Based on the above-described information, the East Providence Police closed the criminal investigation on December 28, 1993.

According to numerous witnesses interviewed by the East Providence Police, Ms. Malloy had a long history of drug addiction, with frequent use of both cocaine and pills, and she had struggled with mental illness, sometimes with severe episodes, since childhood. Two weeks prior to her death, Ms. Malloy asked her sister, [REDACTED], to care for her young daughter, Lauren, because she was not feeling well and could not do so. In the week leading up to her death, several witnesses told police that Ms. Malloy was buying and using narcotics.

2022-2025 RIAG COLD CASE UNIT RE-INVESTIGATION

Review of Original Autopsy, Exhumation of Remains, New Autopsy and DNA Testing

In 2022, RIAG investigators and prosecutors obtained and reviewed a copy of the original autopsy report, as well as all investigative materials and documents provided by the East Providence Police, including original witness statements and photographs of the scene.

RIAG investigators and prosecutors met with Dr. Alexander Chirkov of the Rhode Island Medical Examiner's Office to discuss the original autopsy. After consulting with Lauren Malloy and [REDACTED] the RIAG sought and obtained permission from the Rhode Island Superior Court to exhume Ms. Malloy's remains. The Office then retained the services of a local funeral home to conduct the exhumation. On February 1, 2023, the RIAG, the East Providence Police Department and the Rhode Island Medical Examiner's Office responded to the cemetery and witnessed the exhumation of Ms. Malloy's body. East Providence Police detectives and Medical Examiner staff members photographed and documented that event. Once the excavator successfully removed the remains from the gravesite, the Medical Examiner's Office took custody of the remains and transported them to their office. On February 2, 2023, Dr. Chirkov performed an autopsy on the exhumed remains.

Simultaneously in 2023, the Rhode Island Department of Health, in conjunction with NMS Labs in Pennsylvania, conducted toxicological testing on Ms. Malloy's remains, post exhumation. Analysts conducted both a metals panel and postmortem drug screen. The only notable finding was the elevated presence of beta-phenethylamine, which is a byproduct of decomposition.

Dr. Chirkov subsequently prepared an autopsy report, noting that the body of Ms. Malloy was skeletonized and completely decomposed, with no internal organs present. He further stated that the exhumation "failed to reveal new evidence of diseases or toxic substances related to the case," explaining that meaningful toxicological analysis is not possible after nearly thirty years of decomposition. Additionally, Dr. Chirkov noted that the diagnostic criteria of cardiomyopathy

had changed during the last thirty years, with a modern diagnosis often relying heavily on post-mortem genetic testing, which was not the case in 1993. Finally, Dr. Chirkov emphasized that there was no evidence of blunt or sharp force trauma, and that the original examination likewise documented no physical injuries or suggestion of foul play.

Dr. Chirkov concluded that the cause and manner of death was “undetermined.” Importantly, Dr. Chirkov advised that his finding should not be understood as inconsistent with the original medical examiner’s report finding of death by natural causes. Rather, his finding of “undetermined” cause of death simply means that, based on the state of the remains at the time of the second autopsy, Dr. Chirkov could not render an opinion as to the cause and manner of death. Dr. Chirkov did not find any evidence to support a theory of homicide.

Lauren Malloy also consulted with another forensic pathologist, Dr. Zhonghue Hua. After conducting a preliminary review of materials provided by Lauren Malloy, Dr. Hua disagreed with the cause of death listed in the original autopsy report and concluded that Lori Malloy’s cause and manner of death were “unknown and/or unclear” after almost thirty years. Representatives from the RIAG subsequently met with Dr. Hua on September 25, 2022, and confirmed that while he disagreed with the cause of death described in the first autopsy report, he could not render his own opinion as to the cause and manner of death.

As part of their investigation, RIAG investigators sought to develop DNA evidence. In 2024, the RIAG, in conjunction with the Medical Examiner’s Office, sent a portion of Ms. Malloy’s remains—as well as hair found in her hand when police discovered her body¹—to Bode Technologies (Bode), an out-of-state private laboratory, for DNA testing. Bode analysts extracted DNA profiles from Ms. Malloy’s remains and the hair and compared them. In a report dated September 24, 2024, Bode analysts determined that the mitochondrial DNA profile obtained from the hair found in Ms. Malloy’s hands matched the mitochondrial DNA profile obtained from her exhumed remains, establishing that the hair belonged to Ms. Malloy or one of her female blood relatives.

Witness Interviews

RIAG investigators and prosecutors interviewed multiple witnesses, including several witnesses identified by this Office after the original investigation. These interviews are summarized below.

██████████

On January 29, 2025, RIAG investigators and prosecutors interviewed ██████████, Ms. Malloy’s sister and Lauren Malloy’s aunt. ██████████ stated that ██████████ came to her door around noon on the day Ms. Malloy’s body was found. He appeared concerned about Ms. Malloy and suggested ██████████ contact the police but did not explain why before leaving. ██████████ then

¹ Neither the East Providence Police Department nor the Medical Examiner’s Office have retained any of the other hair samples recovered from Ms. Malloy’s body and/or the scene.

went to Ms. Malloy's apartment and observed yellow tape at the scene, learning from an officer that her sister had died.

██████ told RIAG investigators and prosecutors that her sister experienced significant mental health and drug-related challenges throughout her life. Although ██████ stated that she suspected ██████ of being involved in some way, she could not provide a basis for this suspicion, and she could not point to any evidence implicating him in Ms. Malloy's death. ██████ died in May 1998.

Overall, ██████'s statement to RIAG investigators and prosecutors provided additional context to her original statement to East Providence Police, including more information about Ms. Malloy's boyfriends, ongoing health and mental health history, and ██████'s personal impressions of ██████. Yet, neither of her statements provided any information or evidence that would justify or support a prosecutable case against anyone for causing the death of her sister. ██████ passed away in July 2025.

██████

On February 4, 2025, RIAG investigators and prosecutors interviewed ██████, Ms. Malloy's downstairs neighbor at the time of her death. During the interview, ██████ recalled that a white male, older than her, knocked on her door requesting that she check on Ms. Malloy because he had been unable to reach her. ██████ agreed and found Ms. Malloy in her apartment lying face up with the lower portion of her body in the bathroom, at which time she called law enforcement. ██████ said she never saw the man again and still does not know his name (investigators believe it was ██████).

██████ told RIAG investigators and prosecutors that she did not hear any noises from Ms. Malloy's apartment before finding her body, and that she would have been able to hear any altercation in the apartment. ██████ also noted that Ms. Malloy's apartment was dirty and unkempt, and stated that while she saw hair on the floor in the apartment, it was not in clumps, as had been described in police reports, but appeared to have fallen naturally and simply had not been cleaned. She did not see any strangers coming or going to the apartment nor did she hear any commotion from the apartment prior to discovering Ms. Malloy's body. ██████ provided no information that suggested foul play or any unusual circumstances involved in Ms. Malloy's death.

██████

On December 3, 2024, RIAG investigators and prosecutors interviewed ██████, a longtime acquaintance of Ms. Malloy. ██████ described her relationship with Ms. Malloy as a casual, on-and-off friendship, referring to Ms. Malloy as a "daytime friend." ██████ described Ms. Malloy as having a "party girl" reputation and associating with a rougher crowd. As they got older, they saw each other less frequently, but they continued to run in the same East Providence circles. ██████ stated that she was not in the state when Ms. Malloy's body was discovered, and that she only heard of the death days later when Ms. Malloy's mother called her and informed her. ██████ stated that she had only ever heard Ms. Malloy's death described

as an accidental overdose and she provided no information suggesting that Ms. Malloy died at the hands of another.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED], the eldest son of [REDACTED]² (who died in 2009) and half-brother to Lauren Malloy, was sixteen years old at the time of Ms. Malloy's death. During a phone interview conducted on September 10, 2024, [REDACTED] told RIAG investigators and prosecutors that he and his two younger brothers, [REDACTED], had weekend visitation with [REDACTED], their father. On the morning of Ms. Malloy's death, at 10:00 or 11:00 AM, their father took them to Ms. Malloy's apartment in East Providence to visit their half-sister, Lauren, who was a baby at the time. [REDACTED] explained that his father, [REDACTED], had been romantically involved with Ms. Malloy, but was not (to his knowledge) in a relationship with Ms. Malloy at the time of this visit. [REDACTED] recalled that when they arrived, the front door to Ms. Malloy's apartment was wide open. As they ascended the steps, his father abruptly stopped at the open doorway, turned pale, and quickly ushered the boys back down to the car without explanation. [REDACTED] stated that he never entered the apartment and only later learned that Ms. Malloy had died. He described his father as visibly shaken and said that, to his recollection, his father had some form of exchange at the scene with the landlord's daughter, [REDACTED].

As they were leaving the apartment, [REDACTED] recalled possibly seeing a woman he believed to be [REDACTED] walking toward the apartment building accompanied by a man with a moustache. After the brief visit, [REDACTED]'s father dropped him off with his mother, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] said that the family never discussed [REDACTED]'s death in detail, and he had always believed that she died of an overdose, as he was told by his father. He added that it was not until many years later – after reconnecting with Lauren – that he heard suggestions from Lauren that Ms. Malloy's death may not have been accidental.

Investigators asked [REDACTED] about a text message he sent to Lauren on January 22, 2021, in which he stated that Ms. Malloy might have tried to defend herself, referring to hair found at the scene. [REDACTED] clarified that he based this entirely on what his father told him about the apartment's condition, and that he had not personally seen Ms. Malloy nor the interior of the apartment at the time. When asked to describe Ms. Malloy's behavior around the time of her death, he described her as having severe mood swings and erratic tendencies, recalling that she could be pleasant one day but agitated and volatile the next. In the end, [REDACTED] provided no additional actionable information to further this Office's reinvestigation of the causes of Ms. Malloy's death.

[REDACTED]

RIAG investigators and prosecutors interviewed [REDACTED] on December 17, 2024, after he was identified by other witnesses as knowing Ms. Malloy and having sold her narcotics on numerous occasions. [REDACTED] told investigators that he only knew Ms. Malloy through his older sister, who had partied with Ms. Malloy. He described Ms. Malloy as a heavy drug user and admitted that he had occasionally sold her drugs. Additionally, [REDACTED] stated that

² [REDACTED] was also Lauren Malloy's birth father.

when he learned that Ms. Malloy had overdosed, he was not surprised. He also told investigators that he had had a conversation with Lauren Malloy during which he told her that he did not believe Ms. Malloy had been murdered.

[REDACTED]

A RIAG investigator interviewed [REDACTED] on September 21, 2024, at her home. She stated that she knew Lori Malloy only through her husband, [REDACTED] who was a friend of [REDACTED], Ms. Malloy's boyfriend. [REDACTED] told investigators that she occasionally socialized with Ms. Malloy and [REDACTED] playing cards and described Ms. Malloy as a drug user who was often depressed and medicated. [REDACTED] stated that she heard Ms. Malloy died of an overdose, and she had no information suggesting any other cause of death.

Raymond Blinn

RIAG investigators and prosecutors interviewed Raymond Blinn, retired Lieutenant of the East Providence Police Department, by phone on January 22, 2025. Lieutenant Blinn stated that he spoke with Lauren Malloy in 2020 regarding her mother's death and the East Providence Police Department's initial investigation but had no additional information to provide and nothing further to contribute to the investigation.

Additionally, RIAG investigators and prosecutors interviewed [REDACTED], [REDACTED]'s daughter, and Malloy family friends [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] whose names were provided to the RIAG by Lauren Malloy. None possessed firsthand knowledge regarding Ms. Malloy's death or the circumstances surrounding it.

CONCLUSION

Beginning in June 2022, Ms. Malloy's daughter, Lauren Malloy, presented a series of theories to the RIAG regarding her mother's cause and manner of death, as well as possible motives, and potential suspects. Lauren Malloy theorized that her mother may have been poisoned, or suffered from some kind of physical abuse, including strangulation. Lauren Malloy identified [REDACTED] and several of Ms. Malloy's former boyfriends and close friends as potential suspects. Her suggested motives included that Ms. Malloy purported knowledge of illegal activities involving organized crime, motorcycle gangs, and prostitution rings. Other motives mentioned by Lauren Malloy include life-insurance collection schemes, sexual and domestic violence, drugs, and jealousy.

Notwithstanding these various theories, the official findings regarding Ms. Malloy's death have remained consistent: three medical examiners, including one initially contacted by Lauren Malloy, found no evidence to support the conclusion that Ms. Malloy was murdered or otherwise died at the hands of another. There was no evidence of asphyxiation, nor did the toxicology examination support a conclusion that Ms. Malloy was poisoned.

In addition to the medical examiners' findings, DNA analysis conducted on hair found in Ms. Malloy's hands confirmed that the hair was consistent with her own hair. There was no evidence of blunt force trauma, no evidence of forced entry, and no one observed or heard a struggle in the apartment. No witness provided any information that contradicted the medical findings or indicated an alternative cause of death. On the contrary – witnesses who knew Ms. Malloy at the time consistently described her ongoing health issues, history of drug use, and mental health challenges, as well as her last known movements and interactions in the days preceding her death. Accounts from family, friends, neighbors, and acquaintances uniformly indicate that Ms. Malloy's death was sudden and unexpected, but there were no observations, statements, or forensic findings to suggest that her death was a homicide.

The RIAG undertook this review with the understanding that Lauren Malloy remains terribly impacted by the death of her mother when she was so young. The Cold Case Unit investigators and prosecutors met and spoke with Lauren Malloy frequently and acknowledge and understand how disappointed she is with our decision to go no further with our investigation. But our review has been thorough. Given the current state of the evidence, or lack thereof, the RIAG closes its investigation of this matter and declines to reclassify it as a homicide case.