

My late husband, Jarret, tested positive for COVID-19 and initially attempted to recover at home. When he began experiencing difficulty breathing, he drove himself to an urgent care facility. I was contacted to pick him up because his oxygen level was reportedly too low, and I transported him to the emergency department at Manatee Memorial Hospital on August 31, 2021.

Upon arrival at the hospital, I was asked to leave. This was the last time I saw Jarret in person.

While he was hospitalized, Jarret communicated with me through text messages. He told me that his roommate had also tested positive for COVID-19 but, because the roommate was vaccinated, he believed he was being placed in a room outside of the emergency department. Our text conversations were brief. I remember Jarret expressing concerns about whether he was receiving adequate care.

On September 4, 2021, at approximately 2:36 a.m., I received a telephone call from Jarret's cell phone. I answered the call expecting to hear Jarret's voice. Instead, a woman asked, "Is this Patti?" I responded, "Yes." She then told me that Jarret had been "found" and asked whether someone could bring me to the hospital.

I asked, "Found? What do you mean he was found?" I then asked, "Are you saying my husband is dead?" The woman responded, "I am so sorry."

The use of the word "found" remained concerning to me for several weeks. I signed a release authorizing the hospital to provide me with Jarret's medical records.

After reviewing the records, I discovered information that was both deeply personal and deeply concerning to me. The records stated that I had also tested positive for COVID-19 but had experienced milder symptoms. The records also indicated that neither Jarret nor I was vaccinated.

Most concerning to me was the documentation regarding the circumstances in which Jarret was found. According to the medical records, Jarret was found next to his stretcher, on the floor with his monitoring equipment no longer attached and his IV removed. The records indicated that he was believed to have been deceased for approximately thirty minutes before he was found at 2:13 am on September 4, 2021.

The review of Jarret's medical records also showed no documented notation indicating that he was checked on by hospital staff after approximately 9:30 p.m. on September 3, 2021.