A Calvert County mother suspected of killing two of her three adopted daughters and putting the dead girls’ remains in a freezer has told police that one daughter died when she fell backward while being beaten and another died of starvation, sources close to the investigation said Thursday.

Police said it appears Renee Bowman, 43, toted the dead girls — ages 9 and 11 — in a freezer from her home in Rockville to another in the Bryan Road area of Charles County before finally settling in Lusby, where police discovered the bodies in a block of ice Saturday.

A Montgomery County Homicide Detective walks in front of a house in Lusby, Md., on Monday where police discovered human remains in a basement freezer. Renee Bowman is suspected of killing two of her three adopted daughters. AP

Autopsy results confirming the identities of the frozen bodies are still pending.

Bowman is being held by Calvert County police on child abuse charges stemming from a neighbor finding her 7-year-old daughter wandering in the streets caked in mud last week. The state of the 7-year-old prompted investigators to question Bowman, who police say confessed to freezing her other children, police said.

Law enforcement sources told The Examiner that in her ongoing interview with police, Bowman had provided grisly details about the deaths of her children, including how a beating turned deadly.

A Maryland Department of Human Resources caseworker visited Bowman’s Charles County home in January in response to an anonymous call alleging “child neglect,” a department news release said Thursday. The allegation hadn’t surfaced previously because Bowman was living under a false name. The caseworker observed no signs of neglect in Bowman’s daughter, the release said.

Jude Iweanoge, a lawyer who represented Bowman in a civil suit between 2003 and 2005, met with her Wednesday and said she was not “the same old person,” and added, “the allegation seemed too foul for the person we represented.”
Iweanoge said he never met Bowman’s children, whom she adopted from the District of Columbia — the eldest in 2001, the two youngest, who were sisters, in 2004. Bowman was a foster parent for the children before adopting them, District officials said.

Bowman’s bumpy personal history, which includes a 1999 misdemeanor conviction for threatening physical violence against a 72-year-old man and filing for bankruptcy in 2001, has raised questions about the District’s adoption process.

District officials say Bowman received $2,400 a month from the federal government for the children’s care.

Officials are “supposed to make sure both foster and adoptive parents are not relying on the subsidy as their sole source of income,” said Matthew Fraidin, a law professor a the University of the District of Columbia who studies child welfare.

“The bankruptcy should have sent up red flags,” Fraidin said.

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