

# Couple charged after exposing child to marijuana smoke, losing toddler for 2 hours

By Carol Robinson  
Al.com | 4/3/15

A Birmingham couple was arrested after guests at a Hoover hotel found a 2-year-old girl wandering the hallways alone late at night.

Hoover police were called to the Wingate Hotel on Corporate Ridge Drive on Saturday, March 28, just before 10 p.m. Capt. Gregg Rector said a group of concerned guests staying at the hotel had found the little girl walking around the third floor all by herself.

They took her to the front desk, and called police. Officers and hotel managers tried to make contact with every registered guest, but couldn't find the girl's parent or guardian, Rector said.

At 11:40 p.m., a man showed up at the front desk looking for a lost child. "It had been over two hours since the child was first discovered in the halls," Rector said.

Officers interviewed the man and his companion, who is the girl's mother. Rector said lawmen found out the couple had smoked marijuana while driving to the hotel earlier that night, while the child was in the vehicle with them. They also smoked marijuana while sitting in the car in the hotel parking lot, and again the girl was in the car with them.

Once they entered their hotel room, they fell asleep, and the girl got out of the room.

The girl's mother, 34-year-old Angela Lafaye Tolbert, and Rodriquez Demarco Peterson, 26, are charged with chemical endangerment of a child and second-degree possession of marijuana. Peterson is not the girl's father.

They were booked first into the Hoover City Jail and then transferred to the Shelby County Jail. They were released on Monday after posting \$16,000 bond each.

Rector said family members went to the hotel and took the girl into their care.

"We're fortunate that guests at the hotel found this child and protected her until we could find a responsible family member to take care of her," Rector said. "This situation could have had so many tragic outcomes. Exposing a child to second-hand marijuana smoke is awful and then to basically lose the child for over two hours is troubling."