

Baby's mother gets probation

Seven-month-old girl drowned in tub after she was left alone

By **Marie McCain**

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A 25-year-old West End woman was sentenced to three years' probation Thursday after pleading guilty to involuntary manslaughter in the death of her 7-month-old daughter this year.

Appearing before Hamilton County Common Pleas Judge Fred J. Cartolano, Victoria Gibson was also ordered to perform 500 hours of community service.

Ms. Gibson was indicted in the March 2 death of her daughter, Darnisha McKinney. According to the prosecution, Ms. Gibson left the infant in a bathtub of running water. When she returned to the bathroom the infant had drowned.

Ms. Gibson's attorney, Clyde Bennett II, called the incident a tragic lapse in judgment but said that his client is trying to "move on with her life and better herself."

Initially, Ms. Gibson was

charged with first-degree felony involuntary manslaughter and fourth-degree felony child endangerment. If convicted of both charges she could have received between 11 and 15 years in prison.

However, officials reduced the involuntary manslaughter charge to a third-degree felony. Ms. Gibson pleaded guilty to the new involuntary manslaughter charge and the child endangering charge June 4 and could have been sen-

tenced to at least six years in prison.

The sentence Ms. Gibson received was unusual, considering what she could have received, Mr. Bennett said.

However, he added, that he was not surprised with the judge's decision. "I recommended that she receive probation and am pleased that the judge's decision was consistent with my request."