

# Fotis Dulos, charged with killing his estranged wife, dies 2 days after suicide attempt

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By Elisha Fieldstadt and Doha Madani



Fotis Dulos leaving court in July 2019

**F**otis Dulos, the Connecticut real estate developer charged with murder in the death of his estranged wife, died at a New York City hospital two days after attempting suicide at his home,

his attorney said.

Dulos, 52, was arrested and charged this month with capital murder, murder and kidnapping in connection with



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the disappearance in May of his wife, Jennifer Dulos, whose body has never been found.

A spokeswoman for Jennifer Dulos' family asked for privacy amid the news Thursday evening.

"This is a horrific tragedy all around," the statement from her family said.

The Duloses, who had five children together, were in a contentious and drawn-out divorce and child custody battle when she disappeared in May 2019.

Norm Pattis, Fotis Dulos' attorney, told reporters Thursday that his family had arrived from Greece and had consented to donating his organs. He said the family seeks to clear Fotis' name.

"As we are speaking, we have filed an unusual motion in the Connecticut courts asking to substitute an estate for Fotis Dulos for him as a defendant to force the state to show its hand in a trial filled with evidence, we think, that amounts to no more than innuendo and unsupported suspicion," Pattis said.

On the same day that Fotis Dulos was charged this month, his girlfriend, Michelle Troconis, and his close friend Kent Mawhinney, a lawyer in Connecticut, were charged with conspiracy to commit murder.

"It's been a truly horrific day for the family filled with difficult decisions, medical tests and meeting the requirements to determine death," Pattis said Thursday.

"Having said that, we want to thank everybody for their interest. And as to those who contend that Mr. Dulos' death reflects a consciousness of guilt, we say no," he said. "We say it was more of a conscience overworn with the weight of the world that was too busy to listen and that wanted a story more than it wanted the truth."

Dulos attempted suicide at his home in Farmington, where he was on house arrest, on Tuesday after getting word that he was due at an emergency court hearing to address a discrepancy with the \$6 million bond he had posted.

He was flown from a Connecticut hospital to one in New York, where he received oxygen therapy in a hyperbaric chamber. He was in "dire" condition, Pattis said.

"The potential for a bond revocation was devastating news" to Dulos, he said.

Jennifer Dulos was last seen May 24 after dropping her children off at school. Fotis Dulos and Troconis were first arrested in early June and again in September in connection with her disappearance. They pleaded not guilty to various charges.

Although police said they had evidence that proved that Fotis Dulos was "lying in wait" at his wife's home the day she disappeared, he said on NBC's "Dateline" in September that he had nothing to do with her disappearance and that he believed she was still alive.

But investigators laid out evidence against Dulos in multiple arrest warrants. They said his DNA was found mingled with hers in bags full of items, like zip-ties, gloves, cleaning supplies and clothes, which he was caught stuffing into trash bins in Hartford, with Troconis, after Jennifer Dulos went missing.

His DNA was also found in her home, along with her blood, court documents said.

Dulos had also borrowed an employee's truck the day his wife vanished, and when he returned it — professionally cleaned — he told the employee to replace the front seats and get rid of the old ones, investigators said. The employee did change out the seats, but held onto the ones he removed and gave them to investigators, who linked a bloodlike substance on the passenger seat to Jennifer Dulos' DNA.

Troconis admitted in August that she went with Dulos to have the employee's truck washed and detailed, the arrest warrants said.

According to the warrants, when police asked her why she thought her boyfriend took his employee's truck for the \$250 service, she replied, "Well obviously ... all the evidence says because ... you showed me the picture of the blood in the door, it's because the body of Jennifer at some point was in there."

She also said she had been lying when she said during earlier interviews with police that she was with Dulos on the morning of May 24, according to the warrants, which said she admitted that she did not, in fact, know where he had been.

Troconis' initial claim that she was with Dulos that morning was found on "alibi scripts" in Dulos' home, authorities said. Troconis admitted that she and Dulos had prepared the notes to account for their actions on the day Jennifer Dulos went missing, they said.

Troconis, in her first interview with police, stuck to the notes "nearly verbatim" but started to admit that she had lied after police presented her with evidence during subsequent interviews, according to investigators.

The family's nanny, Lauren Almeida, also proved to be an asset to investigators.

She told police that Dulos never entered his wife's home during a visit with their children on May 22, investigators have said,

removing his excuse for why his DNA was found in the house.

Almeida said that when she went to the house on May 24, she found Jennifer Dulos' handbag on the floor and an uneaten granola bar and a cup of tea on the counter, investigators said.

She also noticed that the paper towel roll was empty, and when she went to replace it, she found that 10 rolls in the 12-pack she had put in the pantry the night before were gone, they said.

"I sat there and wondered what had happened last night that they used 10 rolls of towels," she told police.

Jennifer Dulos wasn't responding to her calls and texts, and "my first thought was that Fotis did something," Almeida told investigators. She said Jennifer Dulos had once told her that her husband had tried to run her over with a car.

In news interviews, Dulos denied knowing what happened to his wife and focused mostly on how much he missed and loved his children, who are in the custody of Jennifer Dulos' mother, Gloria Farber.

But he never "showed any concern about the fact that Jennifer was missing," Almeida told police. ■