ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. – A woman from Shiprock, Ariz., identified as Maylene John, has been charged with murder.

According to an FBI press release, John, 32, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation, stabbed a child in the chest on the morning of Oct. 24.

A witness allegedly heard the child scream for help and rushed to John's bedroom. The door was locked, so the individual kicked it open. They found the child, lying on the floor with a stab wound to the torso, and saw John allegedly sitting at the foot of her bed holding a knife.

As the individual provided the child with a blanket to apply pressure to the wound, John allegedly put the knife to her neck, at which point the other adult forced her to drop it, and then they threw the knife out of the room.

The individual went to a neighbor's house for help. The neighbor called for assistance while the witness returned to John's house. John was in the bedroom with the child and would not allow the individual to enter.

When Navajo Police and Emergency Medical Services arrived, John was taken into custody while EMS attempted to revive the child. The child was declared dead around 3:45 am, according to the press release.

Alexander M.M. Uballez, United States Attorney for the District of New Mexico, and Raul Bujanda, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Albuquerque Field Office, announced on Oct. 27 that John made an initial appearance in federal court on a criminal complaint charging her with murder in Indian Country. John remained in custody until a preliminary and detention hearing on Oct. 31.

A complaint is only an allegation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty. If convicted, John faces up to life in prison.

The Farmington Resident Agency of the FBI Albuquerque Field Office investigated this case with assistance from the Navajo Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney Caitlin L. Dillon is prosecuting the case.

Staff Reports