



STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

NEWS RELEASE

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TWO WARD COUNTY RESIDENTS CHARGED IN SEXUAL ABUSE INVESTIGATION INVOLVING VULNERABLE ADULTS

BISMARCK, N.D. – North Dakota Attorney General Drew H. Wrigley announced today that Amber Hattem and Dalton Hattem, both of Ward County, have been charged in connection with a disturbing case of sexual abuse and exploitation involving vulnerable adult residents at a facility in Minot.

Amber Hattem, a former Certified Nurse Assistant at Minot Health and Rehab Center, faces two counts of Gross Sexual Imposition (Class A felonies) and one count of Indecent Exposure (Class A misdemeanor). The charges allege that between April and December 2024, Amber Hattem engaged in sexual acts with two adult patients who were either unaware of or unable to comprehend the acts due to severe cognitive impairments, including dementia. Hattem is also charged with recording and transmitting a sexually explicit video of herself exposing and touching her genitals while on duty inside a patient's room.

Dalton Hattem, her husband, has been charged with two counts of Conspiracy to Commit Gross Sexual Imposition (Class A felonies). According to the complaint, Dalton Hattem requested and encouraged Amber Hattem to perform the sexual acts against the residents. He also knowingly received, possessed, and stored the sexually explicit videos of the acts created by Amber Hattem.

Attorney General Wrigley condemned the alleged conduct, emphasizing the importance of protecting vulnerable adults and holding accountable all individuals involved in such exploitation.

“The charges filed against Amber and Dalton Hattem reveal deeply troubling allegations of acts committed against individuals who were under care and unable to protect themselves. These are egregious allegations of troubling violations of human dignity and trust,” Wrigley said. *“The State of North Dakota is fully committed to pursuing justice for these victims, and we will continue working closely with our law enforcement partners to ensure accountability.”*

Attorney General Wrigley praised the North Dakota Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, the Ward County State's Attorney Office, and the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) for their coordinated and diligent efforts in investigating and bringing these charges forward.

“This case highlights the power of collaboration between local and state agencies in protecting our most vulnerable citizens,” Wrigley added. *“I am grateful to the investigators and prosecutors whose thorough work made it possible to file charges and move this matter towards justice.”*

If convicted, Amber and Dalton Hattem face significant prison time and mandatory sex offender registration.

The ND MFCU receives 75% of its funds from the US DHHS under a 2025 grant of \$1,180,272.00. The State of North Dakota provides 25%, or \$393,420.00.

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