

Updated: Statement on arrest of BCHFS staff member 5/16/2022

Daniel W Lanning, Jr. appeared in court on 5/11/2022 with his attorney Brian T. Shinkle. The defendant waived the preliminary hearing and arraignment and entered a plea of not guilty. Probable cause was found and a pre-trial conference was set for 6/1/2022 at 9:00 a.m. in the White County Court.

Original statement:

A staff member of the Baptist Children's Home and Family Services of Illinois (BCHFS) was arrested Friday, April 15, 2022, on multiple Criminal Sexual Assault charges. Daniel W. Lanning Jr. was charged after a resident of the BCHFS facility in Carmi brought credible accusations against him. BCHFS has cooperated with the Department of Children and Family Services and the White County Sheriff's office in their investigation over the past week.

Daniel W. Lanning Jr. was arraigned on 4/18/2022 in White County Court, charged with 4 counts of Criminal Sexual Assault/Supervisor with Victim 13-17, involving one individual. He is being held at the White County jail.

He and his wife served as house parents in a BCHFS cottage since July 2021. His wife was not implicated in the investigation. Both Lanning and his wife were dismissed from Baptist Children's Home and Family Services after his arrest.

A background check was conducted at the time Mr. Lanning was hired, with no incidents reported.

"We are fully cooperating with investigators," said Interim Executive Director Doug Devore. "The care of our residents is very important to us, and we have extensive policies in place in an ongoing effort to protect the children in our care." Devore served on the staff of BCHFS 44 years, including 22 years as Executive Director. He returned in an interim capacity in February following the departure of the Executive Director to accept a position out of state.

There will be a thorough review of BCHFS policies and practices, Devore said.

The Baptist Children's Home and Family Services is a not-for-profit ministry founded in 1918 to serve orphaned children in Illinois at its campus in Carmi. In recent decades, services have been expanded to assist children in troubled situations with the goal of restoring them to their families. BCHFS also operates a home for women with crisis pregnancies and a pregnancy resource center and outpatient counseling centers in 14 locations across IL.