



MICHELLE A. HENRY
PENNSYLVANIA ATTORNEY GENERAL

Attorney General Henry Announces Charges Against Five Men for Sexual Abuse of Children Across Pennsylvania

Victims and defendants in all five cases were members of Jehovah's Witnesses congregations; arrests follow sexual abuse charges against nine different members of Jehovah's Witness congregations in October 2022 and February 2023

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PHILADELPHIA— Attorney General Michelle Henry today announced the filing of criminal charges against five Pennsylvania men for the sexual assault and exploitation of children. In each case, the defendants and their victims were members of Jehovah's Witnesses congregations.

Arrested and [charged](#) are:

David Balosa, of Philadelphia County; Errol William Hall, of Delaware County; Shaun Sheffer, of Butler County; Terry Booth of Panama City, FL; and Luis Ayala-Velasquez, of Berks County.

"The details of these crimes are sad and disturbing, facts which are made even more abhorrent because the defendants used their faith communities or their own families to gain access to victims," said Attorney General Michelle Henry. "Our office will never stop working to seek justice for those who have been victimized, and we will continue to investigate and prosecute anyone who harms the most vulnerable in our society."

The defendants are being prosecuted by the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General for the following offenses:

- **David Balosa**, 62, of Philadelphia, is alleged to have sexually assaulted a young girl when she was just 4-years-old. Balosa became close to a family in his congregation after moving to the United States. They welcomed him, and even allowed him to stay in their home where he had access to the young victim and sexually assaulted her. Balosa is charged with Aggravated Indecent Assault, Indecent Assault, and Corruption of Minors.
- **Errol William Hall**, 50, of Delaware County, is alleged to have inappropriately touched a 16-year-old girl whom he knew through his Jehovah's Witnesses congregation. Hall was an elder in the congregation, which helped him gain the trust of many parents and afforded him access to their children. He is charged with Indecent Assault and Corruption of Minors.
- **Shaun Sheffer**, 45, of Butler County, is alleged to have sexually assaulted a young family member, beginning when the child was just 7-years-old. Due to their close relationship, Sheffer was often left alone with her for long periods of time during which he repeatedly raped and assaulted the young girl. He is charged with Rape, Involuntary Deviate Sexual Intercourse, Aggravated Indecent Assault, Indecent Assault, and Corruption of Minors.
- **Terry Booth**, 57, of Panama City, FL, was a mentor to a 16-year-old boy whom he knew through his Jehovah's Witness congregation when he lived in Allegheny County. He spent extended periods of time with the child during which he proceeded to engage in inappropriate sexual conversations and inappropriate touching. Booth is charged with Indecent Assault and Corruption of Minors.
- **Luis Manuel Ayala-Velasquez**, 55, of Reading, is alleged to have abused a young family member for several years, beginning when she was 12-years-old. Testimony from the victim stated that Ayala-Velasquez would sneak into her bedroom while she was sleeping and sexually assault her. Years later, when his victim was an adult, he allegedly raped her in his home. He is charged with Rape, Involuntary Deviate Sexual Intercourse, Aggravated Indecent Assault, Indecent Assault, Endangering the Welfare of Children, and Corruption of Minors.

The charges in these cases have been filed in the corresponding counties of Philadelphia, Delaware, Butler, Allegheny, and Northampton.

Anyone with information regarding child sexual abuse should make a report to ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313, and anyone with additional information regarding these cases should make a report to the Office of Attorney General's hotline at 888-538-8541. These cases are being prosecuted by Chief Deputy Attorney General Christopher Jones. All charges are allegations and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General
Strawberry Square
Harrisburg, PA 17120
717-787-3391

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PA Office of Attorney General, Strawberry Square FL 16, Harrisburg, PA 17120-0001 United States