



# BCPO News

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## **Parents Charged with Murder of 4-Month-Old Son**

*Placed infant in "time out" under comforter, went outside to smoke*

Burlington County Prosecutor Scott Coffina and New Jersey State Police Colonel Patrick J. Callahan announced today that the parents of a four-month-old boy who suffocated in February at the motel where the family was living have been charged with Murder in connection with his death.

William Herring, 42 and Brianna Brochhausen, 22, whose residence at the time of the incident was the Hilltop Motel in the 100 block of Route 68 in Springfield Township, were each charged with Murder (First Degree) and Conspiracy to Commit Murder (First Degree). The initial charge of Endangering the Welfare of a Child (Second Degree) was filed March 9 against the couple but was upgraded after further investigation.

Herring and Brochhausen were taken into custody yesterday by the New Jersey State Police. A first appearance will be held today in Superior Court in Mount Holly. A detention hearing will be held later this week.

The investigation revealed that paramedics and Springfield Township police officers were called to the motel on the night of February 14 for a report of an infant who had stopped breathing.

The investigation further revealed that Herring and Brochhausen were frustrated because their son, Hunter, would not stop crying on that night, and decided he needed to be placed in a "time out." He was positioned on his stomach on the bed, and the comforter was pulled over him, covering his head and entire body. The parents then went outside to smoke cigarettes, returning to the room approximately 10 minutes later, where they discovered that Hunter was not breathing and was unresponsive.

Hunter was taken to Virtua Hospital in Mount Holly, and immediately transferred to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, where he had minimal brain activity and was breathing with the assistance of a respirator. He died March 3 after life support was removed.

"The thoughtless actions of these individuals ended up costing a defenseless 4-month-old infant his life," said Colonel Callahan, the New Jersey State Police Superintendent. "I commend the detectives of our Homicide South Unit and Criminal Investigation Office for their commitment and dedication to finding justice for Baby Hunter."

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Philadelphia Deputy Chief Medical Examiner Albert Chu declared the cause of Hunter's death to be "complications of suffocation," and the manner of death to be homicide.

Herring and Brochhausen are being prosecuted by Assistant Prosecutor Michael Angermeier. The case was investigated by the New Jersey State Police Homicide South Unit, and Troop "C" Criminal Investigation Office.

"The responsibilities of becoming a new parent can sometimes be overwhelming," Prosecutor Coffina said. "Those who find themselves at a point of crisis when caring for a newborn child should know that help is available, and they must seek that help rather than taking actions that might harm their child."

Parents Anonymous of New Jersey offers parent support groups, and also provides a 24-hour Stressline/Family Helpline to listen to the concerns of parents and provide referral and crisis intervention information. They can be reached at 1-800-THE-KIDS, or [www.pofnj.com](http://www.pofnj.com)

New Jersey also has a Safe Haven Infant Protection Act. The law allows parents or their representatives to anonymously surrender a newborn baby at any hospital emergency room, police station, fire station, ambulance, first aid or rescue squad that is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For more information visit <http://www.njsafehaven.org/>

*All persons are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*

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