



BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Foster Mom Charged with Multiple Counts of Child Abuse & Hate Crime Allegations

A 49-year-old Oroville foster mother was arraigned today in Butte County Superior Court on multiple counts of child abuse, including assault, criminal threats, and hate crime enhancements.

Candace Lee Johnson, 49, of Oroville, was booked into the Butte County Jail on September 21, 2021, for abuse she committed against six children in her custody ranging in ages from four to 15 years old.

District Attorney Mike Ramsey said a Butte County Sheriff's Office investigation into the abuse began on August 28, 2021 when a video surfaced depicting what appeared to be Johnson physically abusing one of the children in her home. Johnson was initially arrested and booked on a single count of child abuse and another count of assault on August 29, 2021, but she posted bail and was out of jail within twenty-four hours. The children however were removed from her home by child protection authorities.

Ramsey said the investigation into Johnson continued after she bailed out of jail and evidence of more acts of child abuse were discovered. Ongoing investigation also led to information that Johnson regularly hurled racial epithets at the only two children of color in her custody and that abuse towards these children was motivated in part because of their race. A warrant, based on these new charges, was issued for her arrest, but multiple attempts to locate Johnson and make the arrest were unsuccessful.

Finally, on September 21, 2021, Johnson turned herself in to the Butte County Jail. The Butte County District Attorney's Office filed a criminal complaint against her alleging eight counts of child abuse, criminal threats, and assault with two hate crime enhancements. Johnson is scheduled to be back in court with her attorney on September 29, at 8:30 a.m. for further arraignment/entry of plea. She remains in custody with bail set at \$330,000.