

Lawyer reports hidden camera in Carter County Jail

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By **Lexy French**

ARDMORE, Okla. (KTEN) — An Ardmore lawyer has reached out to the Oklahoma Attorney General's office after learning about a hidden camera inside the Carter County Jail.

Attorney Jason May said a jail employee found the camera inside a light fixture in the attorney-client conference room. May maintains that secretly recording conversations in that room violates the Fifth and Sixth Amendments.

"I don't know who put it there, or how long it's been there, but the bottom line is that it is there and it is a problem," May said.

Carter County Sheriff Chris Bryant explained the camera had been set up as a part of an investigation two decades ago.

"I was unaware that it was there," Bryant said. "The former sheriff in 2002 had authorized a recording device to be placed in the light fixture for a limited purpose that led to the arrest of an attorney, Twana Chereese Smith, for smuggling contraband into the room," Bryant said.

The sheriff said Smith was providing legal counsel for her son, Josh Bagwell, a convicted murderer. The contraband included hacksaw blades.

"I have no reason to believe that the camera had been used subsequent to that investigation 20 years ago," Bryant said. "Once I was made aware of it, I checked into and got it removed, then got with the district attorney and we turned it over to OSBI."

The Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation will determine whether the device in question had been used since 2002 to record confidential attorney-client communications.

Smith pleaded guilty on charges of attempting to help her son escape and she was convicted in 2002. Smith was released from prison in 2012, according to court records.

Her son, Joshua Bagwell, is serving a life sentence in Texas for the 1996 murder of a Waurika cheerleader whose body was dumped in Montague County, Texas.