

Oklahoma Headlines

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Kennedi Patterson

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(KTEN) — A multi-county grand jury has filed formal accusations against Coal County Sheriff Jason Smith, calling for his immediate suspension and removal from office.

The grand jury charges Smith with oppression in office, accusing him of sexual harassment, physical assault, and creating a hostile work environment.

Incidents listed include inappropriate touching of employees; assaulting a dispatcher; and shoving his wife during an altercation witnessed by staff.

A second count accuses Smith of habitual drunkenness, saying he was intoxicated while on duty on multiple occasions.

The grand jury is asking a district court judge to suspend Smith as sheriff until the case goes to trial.

Sheriff Smith issued a statement on his indictment for a domestic dispute now under investigation by the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation.

"I'm looking forward to my opportunity to be heard in court, and I absolutely believe I will be vindicated of these accusations." he wrote.

Smith added that the accusations made against him are false, and that he intends to keep serving Coal County.