



News Release

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Benton County nurse suspended on charges of sex crimes against children

OLYMPIA -- A Benton County registered nurse's license was immediately suspended by the state Nursing Commission after criminal charges of possessing images of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct, sexually exploiting a minor, and possessing a controlled substance without a prescription. Ruddell has also allegedly admitted to diverting controlled substances.

Charges say Darrin L. Ruddell (RN.00133423) was arrested after Benton County detectives found images of pre-pubescent children engaged in sexually explicit acts on computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices seized from his home. Detectives also found sedative medications for which Ruddell didn't have a prescription. Ruddell is criminally charged with six counts of possessing depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct, two counts of sexual exploitation of a minor (with aggravating circumstances – position of trust), and one count of possession of a controlled substance.

Ruddell has 20 days to respond to the charges and suspension. He cannot work as a registered nurse until the charges are resolved. The legal documents on this case are available online by clicking the link to "[Provider Credential Search](#)" on the [Department of Health website](#); copies can also be requested by calling 360-236-4700. Anyone who believes a health care provider acted unprofessionally is encouraged to call that number to report their complaint.

The Nursing Commission protects public health and safety in Washington by regulation of nursing practice. The Commission establishes, monitors, and enforces qualifications for licensing, consistent standards of practice, continuing competency, and discipline.

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