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March 13

Ex-sheriff's deputy faces child sex abuse charges

Horace Barstow, of Norridgewock, is charged with sexually assaulting three children who attended his wife's day care.

By RACHEL OHM Morning Sentinel

NORRIDGEWOCK — State police have arrested a former sheriff's deputy, the husband of a day care center operator, on charges of unlawful sexual contact with three children.

Horace Barstow, 67, of Norridgewock, was arrested Friday and released on bail, [Stephen McCausland](#), spokesman for the [Maine Department of Public Safety](#), said in a news release. He did not release the names or genders of the children, but he said they were all under 12 years old and that the offenses took place at the day care site.

Barstow's wife, Barbara Barstow, runs ABC 123 Day Care at their home at 43 Upper Main St., according to the news release.

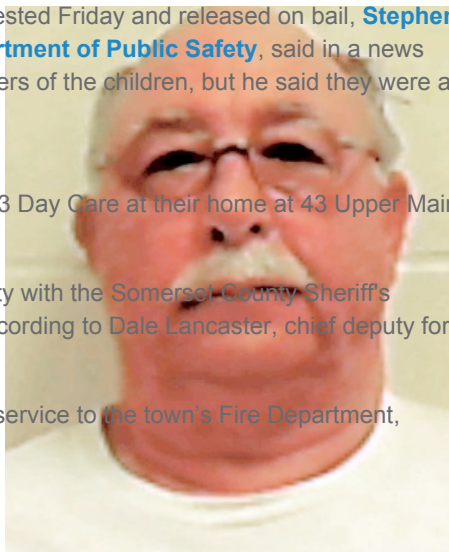
He was employed as a part-time sheriff's deputy with the [Somerset County Sheriff's Department](#) from April 1985 to March 2001, according to Dale Lancaster, chief deputy for the department.

In 2005, Barstow was honored for 25 years of service to the town's Fire Department, according to Morning Sentinel archives.

On Monday afternoon the day care center was open, according to a woman at the business who answered the door but would not identify herself. She said Barbara Barstow did not want to comment. Several children were seen inside.

A phone request to speak with Horace Barstow also was declined Monday afternoon.

The state [Department of Health and Human Services](#) has conducted an investigation of the day care center, said John Martins, department spokesman.



Horace Barstow [click image to enlarge](#)

Contributed photo



Children's toys can be seen outside [click image to enlarge](#)

the ABC 123 Daycare shortly after kids went back inside on Upper Main Street in Norridgewock on Monday. Horace Barstow, husband of Barbara Barstow who runs the facility, was arrested by police and charged with sexually assaulting three children who attend the daycare.



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The day care is licensed with the state, he said.

Staff photo by David Leaming

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"We will be taking action, although we are not sure yet what that will be. It could mean a conditional license or several other things," Martins said.

He said he did not know how many children were enrolled for day care, how many the business was licensed to have or how long it had been open.

According to the website Child Care Choices, a state resource that helps parents find child care providers based on location and a quality rating system, the center has been in operation for at least a year and has had no serious licensing violations in the past year. It serves pre-school and school-age children from age 5 to age 12, according to the website.

It is also listed as meeting regulatory standards, having a daily schedule, curriculum plans and regular communication with parents. However, it did not meet the criteria for the highest level of quality on the website, which is run by Health and Human Services.

State police are continuing to interview parents of current and past students as part of the investigation, according to McCausland.

Barstow was released at 3:37 p.m. Friday on \$200 cash bail from the Somerset County Jail, plus a \$60 bail commissioner's fee, according to an intake worker at the jail, which is in East Madison.

Barstow is to have no direct or indirect contact with the children identified as victims and is not to enter any residence, place of employment or school where they could be. Barstow also is to have no contact with any female under the age of 16.

He is scheduled to appear at 8:30 a.m. April 3 in Somerset County Superior Court.

Rachel Ohm — 612-2368

rohmainetoday.com

This story has been corrected. An earlier version stated that Barstow was a full-time sheriff's deputy.

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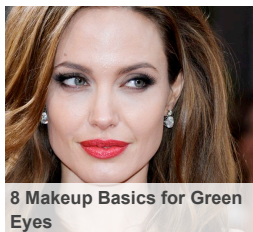
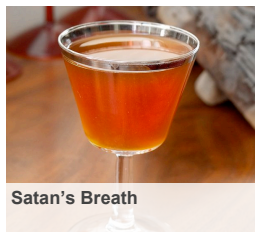
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