

## Former Police Chief Indicted On First-Degree Murder Charge

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[2015 Cop Domestic Violence Murder- police chief](#) Russell Ray Bertram

PIERRE, SD -

A grand jury in southern South Dakota has indicted a 63-year-old man who has served as a police chief on a first-degree murder charge.

Attorney General Marty Jackley's office said Wednesday that if Russell Ray Bertram of Sioux Falls is convicted, he faces the death penalty or a mandatory life sentence.

Authorities say Bertram in 2009 killed Leonila Stickney, who was his 26-year-old fiance.

At the time, the Gregory County Sheriff's office said authorities believed Stickney's death was the result of an accidental shooting.

Officials said then that Stickney's friend was getting back into a vehicle after shooting a pheasant when he accidentally fired, striking her in the chest.

Bertram has served as police chief of Harrisburg and as a police officer.

Court records don't list an attorney for Bertram.

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