

December 19, 2016

Attn: Human Resources

I would like to file a formal complaint against the Bradley County Sheriff's Office, Sheriff Eric Watson, Sr. Lt. Walls, Capt. Gabe Thomas, Lt. Hickman, and Sgt. Kennedy for retaliation and hostile working environment.

My name is Mack Beasley and I am currently a Corrections Officer at the Bradley County Justice Center, however that only recently became my job title. Up until Nov. 14, 2016, I was in charge of the Road Crew for the Sheriff's Office and oversaw inmate workers that went out and picked up trash that was funded by the Tennessee Department of Transportation through a grant. On Nov. 09, 2016, I was called into a meeting with my direct supervisor Lt. Tim Mason Environmental Officer, Senior Lt. Christy Walls Corrections, and Capt. Gabe Thomas also of Corrections, where I was informed by Capt. Thomas that starting Nov. 14, 2016, I would be reporting to Corrections under Lt. Joleen Hickman, but my job duties would continue to be litter crew and only my hours were changing. I was told that I would report for roll call with Lt. Hickman and then proceed to get my inmate workers and go perform the morning cleaning detail and then would go about my normal routine of picking up trash and keeping Bradley County clean. However, when I arrived to work on Nov. 14, 2016, I was told by Sgt. Susan Kennedy that they had been instructed over the weekend by Sr. Lt. Walls that I would be working on shift and only going out with the Road Crew when they could let me go based on how many officers they had on shift and if TCI Official were on premises. I informed her that I would have to contact Lt. Mason since it was my understanding at the meeting he would still be my direct supervisor as I was still receiving my salary through the Litter Grant and that had not been what we were told just a few days prior by Capt. Thomas. When Lt. Mason arrived at the Justice Center, I spoke with him and informed him of what I had been told that morning, he instructed me to follow through with what was discussed during the meeting he was present for and go out and collect trash as he had received many calls about litter and also dump sites. At approximately 8:30 a.m., I

received a phone call from Sgt. Kennedy wanting to know when I would be back in the jail, I informed her of what Lt. Mason had told me and she ordered me to return to the jail. I again called Lt. Mason, as I was instructed he would still be my direct supervisor, and told him what I was being told and he said to give him a few minutes and he would call me back. About five minutes later I received a call from Lt. Hickman who stated that she had just spoke with Sr. Lt. Walls and that I was to return to the jail immediately and work on shift inside. I again called Lt. Mason and he said to go ahead and return to the jail until he could speak with Sr. Lt. Walls and find out what was going on. When I returned to the jail I was met by Sgt. Kennedy who immediately began to lecture me about not following her orders and then she called for Lt. Hickman. Again at this time I meant no disrespect as I was under the understanding that Lt. Mason was still my direct supervisor and was told no different by Command Staff. At this point they both lectured me, we talked for a little while and then I went inside the jail and opened a pod as instructed. The following day, Nov. 15, 2016, my wife made a comment on Chattanooga Times Free Press' Facebook article regarding Sheriff Eric Watson and a letter that the County Commission had received. On Nov. 16, 2016 which was a scheduled day off, I received a call from Lt. Hickman shortly after 10:00 a.m. telling me that she had gotten a call from Sr. Lt. Walls and that I needed to bring my county issued truck to the jail and turn the keys over to Lt. James Gregory. I proceeded to ask her why and she said she didn't know for sure. She stated that the truck would remain at the jail and when I needed to take the inmates out to work, I would have to get the keys to the truck from her. Since this vehicle was not a Correction Department vehicle and was under Environmental I found this odd and outside of policy. I proceeded to try to contact Sheriff Watson via text and explained what I had been told still not understanding I requested a meeting with him and that if he indeed wanted the vehicle to be returned I felt it was my duty to return it to him as he was the one that issued me the truck. I never received a response from Sheriff Watson to my request to meet with him. Due to being a scheduled day off and being out with my family away from where the truck was parked outside my home, I knew it would be later in the evening and or the next morning before it was convenient for me to return especially since my wife would need to follow me as I would need a ride back and since I was still hoping to be able to sit down with Sheriff Watsons. Later that evening around 6:00 p.m., I received a call from Capt. Thomas ordering me to return the truck, due to his tone of

voice and fear that they would think I was "stealing the truck by refusing to return it quickly", I explain to him I was not home and had not been home all day and since my wife had been working and had only recently gotten off for the day, there had been no one to follow to bring me home. Due to the fact I was driving at the time of Capt. Thomas' call and it being on my personal cell phone not the county issued cell, I had my phone on speaker phone and my wife being in the vehicle with me overheard the whole conversation I was having with Capt. Thomas. He seemed to understand why I had not been able to return the truck. I then asked him why I was having to turn it in and he stated "something you posted on Facebook pissed off a County Commissioner." I informed him that I had personally not posted anything on Facebook and even told him he could go see for himself. He again stated that he was unsure what post but "a Commissioner was pissed". At this time Capt. Thomas stated that he was unsure what was going on with the changes from the previous meeting mentioned above and was letting Sr. Lt. Walls handle everything involved with my position change along with the others. When my wife and I arrived at home we ate supper and then took the truck to the Bradley County Justice Center and I handed the keys to Lt. Gregory as I was order to and he was unaware I was to turn the truck in and why I was ordered to turn them into him. Lt. Gregory then gave them to Lt. Carol Edwards as Lt. Gregory was leaving for the day. My wife later spoke with County Commissioner Charlotte Peak who was the commissioner she opposed in the original post via Facebook Messenger and Mrs. Peak told her that she was not upset and didn't know what County Commissioner they were speaking of and since she was the only Commissioner that was confronted on Facebook this caught me by surprise when my wife informed me to this. This raised the question as to who did she really upset. On Nov. 19, 2016, I asked Lt. Hickman about getting the truck the following Monday since I and my inmate workers were supposed to be at Tri-State Exhibition Center for a special work detail, she informed me that when she received the call for me to bring my vehicle to the jail that I was not to drive the truck nor was I to have contact with the inmate workers unless she needed me to do the morning cleaning with them. Again this is not what she told me on the phone a few days prior. On Dec. 13, 2016, my wife again posted on Facebook in regards to Sheriff Eric Watson using her personal Facebook account and her freedom of speech in regards to another newspaper article where Sheriff Eric Watson's integrity and conduct unbecoming. Again this was not posted by me or on my Facebook.

I was scheduled off of work the two days following this post and when I returned to work on Dec. 16, 2016, I was informed by Lt. Hickman that I was being moved to night shift starting the very next day. I was told this at approximately 11:50 a.m. the day before my shift would be changing from days to nights. When asked why they again danced around the truth and stated it was because night shift was shorthanded. I personally know that based on seniority I was not the lowest man and I also know an officer on my shift that had been hinting to Lt. Hickman that he would be happy to move to night shift, yet I was the one switched.

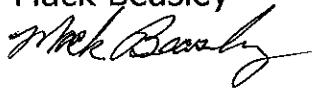
In my personal and professional opinion I feel that I am being punished for a post that my wife is making again on her personal Facebook account and under her freedom of speech and might I say that I don't have access to. I have not violated any policy and procedures of the Sheriff's Office and therefore have not received any formal disciplinary actions. In truth, weeks before the first sudden change in my job title Sheriff Watson himself along with other admin praised me for the work I had been doing with the litter crew and actually due to that good work is why Sheriff Watson had issued me the truck to replace the van we had been using up to this time. In fact, he had been interviewed numerous times since I had taken over that position and has been quoted how proud he was of this service he was able to provide the county and the work that his officer had been doing. However, I do firmly believe that my change in duties, my vehicle being taken away, and the sudden change of shift is direct retaliation for the comments that were made by my wife and not me. I am not the only Officer that has been treated unfairly and due to them not wanting to get in trouble by Sheriff Watson and having the same retaliation done to them, I will leave their names out of this. I do not feel safe as an employee knowing that at any time they will continue to harass me by making abrupt changes to my working schedule or environment just because they can. I feel that since Sheriff Watson cannot take the fight to my wife due to the possible confirmation of her opinions on his personal and professional integrity that he is punishing me and in fact trying to get me to resign to try to shut her up and make her opposition to his position go away. I feel this is unfair treatment and also hostile as again I have no control over when and where my wife decides to express her freedom of speech. I feel that my job with the County should be evaluated by work standard and my employee record and not based on outside influences.

If you would like to meet and or get further information from me please feel free to contact me at 423-790-2686. I would like you to know that I and my wife will cooperate and provide you with any additional information you might require to fully investigate and resolve this formal complaint.

I appreciate your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely

Mack Beasley

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mack Beasley". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the printed name.