



## OFFICE OF THE MERCER COUNTY PROSECUTOR

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Ewing Township Police Officer Arrested for the Murder of his Three-Month-Old Daughter**

**EWING** -- Mercer County Prosecutor Angelo J. Onofri announced that a Ewing Township police officer was arrested this morning and charged with the murder of his three-month-old daughter, Hailey.

Daniel Bannister, 31, was taken into custody this morning at the Wawa on Silvia Street by detectives with the Mercer County Homicide Task Force. He has been suspended from the township police department since December 2018. Bannister was hired in May 2017. The prosecutor's office has filed a motion to detain him pending trial.

Catherine Bannister, 29, Hailey's mother and Daniel's wife, was also charged today with second-degree endangering the welfare of a child in connection with Hailey's death. The prosecutor's office will be filing a motion to detain her pending trial.

On December 5, 2018, Ewing Township Emergency Medical Services responded to the Bannister's Ewing home on a 911 call for an unresponsive three-month-old baby having difficulty breathing. Emergency medical technicians assessed the baby, who was not breathing and in cardiac arrest. The baby, later identified as Hailey Bannister, was transported to Capital Health Medical Center - Hopewell, where medical personnel determined Hailey suffered a fractured skull, brain bleed, and had multiple fractured ribs. Hailey was listed in critical condition and transferred from Capital Health to Robert Wood Johnson Children's Hospital in New Brunswick, NJ.

Due to the suspicious nature of Hailey's injuries, the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office Special Victims Unit and Homicide Task Force were contacted and advised of Hailey's status. Detectives responded to Robert Wood Johnson Children's Hospital and began their investigation on December 5. After several days of hospitalization, Hailey died on December 11, 2018.

An autopsy was conducted in December 2018 by the Middlesex County Medical Examiner's Office and following additional testing, analysis of medical documentation, and forensic review, Hailey's death was ruled a homicide. It was concluded that Hailey's cause of death was complications from blunt impact trauma of the head including skull fractures and subdural hemorrhage. The nature of Hailey's injuries indicated an ongoing pattern of abuse.

Despite having been charged, all persons are presumed innocent until found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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