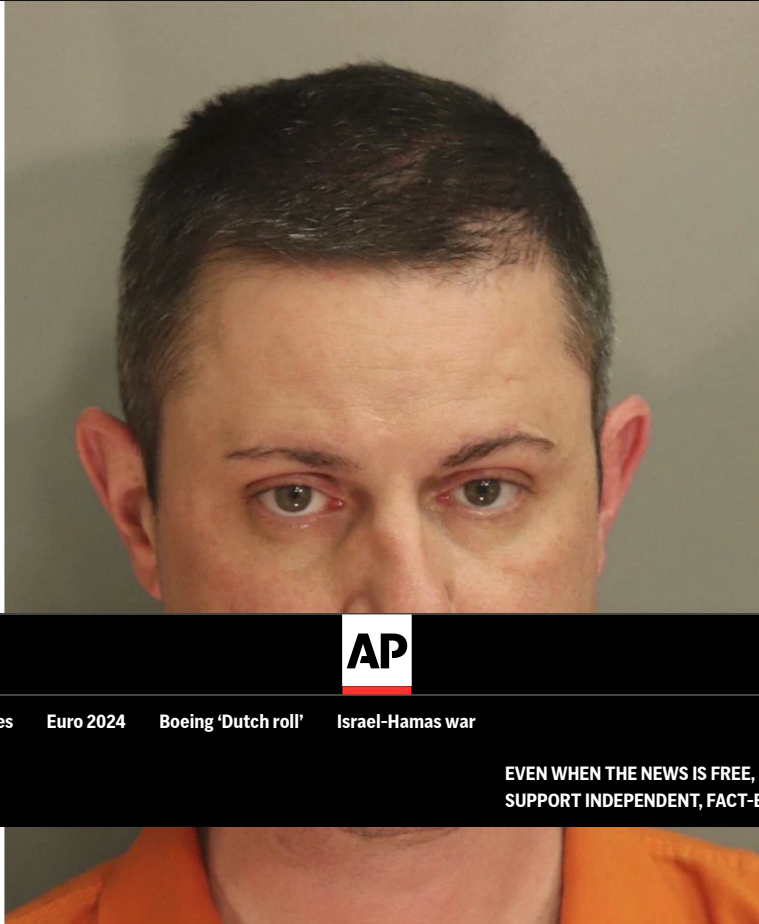


U.S. NEWS

Trooper with checkered FBI past convicted of child rape in Alabama



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MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — A former FBI agent was convicted Friday of sexually assaulting an 11-year-old girl while serving as an Alabama state trooper — a law enforcement job he landed even after he was kicked out of the FBI amid earlier claims that he raped a co-worker at knifepoint.

Christopher Bauer's case, first detailed in an [Associated Press investigation](#), showed how he was able to hide a checkered past and move from one law enforcement job to another with the help of an allegedly forged letter making it appear he was "eligible for rehire."

Bauer, 44, was found guilty of first-degree sodomy and sexual abuse of a child under 12 following a weeklong trial during which his attorneys claimed the girl had made up the allegations. Sentencing was scheduled for Aug. 1.

Bauer, who has been jailed since his 2021 arrest, faces similar child sex abuse charges outside New Orleans. Louisiana state police said Friday they intend to extradite him following the Alabama proceedings.

Messages were sent to Bauer's attorneys seeking comment. Bauer did not respond to a letter AP sent him in jail.

During the Alabama trial, the child, who is now a young teen, testified through tears that she was repeatedly abused by Bauer over a period of years, too scared to say no or to tell anyone what was happening.

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Jurors also saw a recording of the child's 2021 interview with a child abuse investigator in which she described the same abuse.

The AP is withholding some details of the allegations to protect the girl's identity. Law enforcement became involved after the child eventually told a friend and the friend's parent alerted the school.

Bauer took the stand and testified in his own defense during the trial, responding "no, never" when asked if he had abused or sodomized the child.

"If she said I did something to her, then yes that's a lie," he said on cross-examination.

Bauer's time in the FBI was not discussed in detail at the trial. The judge granted a defense request to exclude statements about the allegations by a co-worker in Louisiana that he had raped her at knifepoint.

The FBI has said Bauer forged a letter that scrubbed his record clean and helped clear the way to his hiring by the Alabama state police in 2019. The document, obtained by AP, confirmed his decade of "credible service" and deemed him "eligible for rehire."

After Bauer's arrest, the FBI told the AP the letter in question was "not legitimate" but declined to comment on its subsequent investigation. Federal authorities did not charge Bauer but had been prepared to do so if he had been released from state custody, according to two former law enforcement officials who weren't authorized to discuss the federal inquiry and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Bauer's arrest came amid a reckoning in which the FBI pledged to [crack down](#) on sexual misconduct following [AP reporting](#) that found a pattern of supervisors avoiding discipline and retiring with full benefits even after claims of sexual misconduct against them had been substantiated.

The case also highlights the slipshod system of decertification in the United States in which problematic officers have remained in law enforcement by joining a new agency or relocating to a different state. For years, federal law enforcement agencies did not provide data on fired or disciplined agents to the National Decertification Index.

Alabama authorities either overlooked or were unaware of Bauer's earlier misconduct. AP's investigation found he omitted his ouster from the FBI on his application to the Alabama state police, including that he had been suspended without pay and stripped of his security clearance in 2018 amid a string of sexual

misconduct allegations he faced working in the FBI's New Orleans office. An internal inquiry found that Bauer, at a minimum, violated FBI policy, including by having sex in an FBI vehicle.

Many of the allegations played out in Louisiana court filings that had been public for a year when Bauer was hired in Alabama. The woman who accused him of rape, a co-worker of Bauer's at the FBI, wrote in an application for a restraining order that Bauer had choked her and made her "scared for my life."

Bauer has disputed those claims, telling colleagues the acts were consensual. But the woman previously told AP that Bauer sexually assaulted her so frequently her hair began to fall out.

"It was a year of torture," she said. "He quite literally would keep me awake for days. I couldn't eat. I couldn't sleep, and in six months I went from 150 pounds to 92 pounds. I was physically dying from what he was doing to me."

Mustian reported from Miami.

___ Contact AP's global investigative team at Investigative@ap.org or <https://www.ap.org/tips/>



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