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BRADLEY COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE BRADLEY COUNTY JUSTICE COMPLEX

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MEDIA RELEASE

BRADLEY COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE INVESTIGATES RETALIATORY ASSAULT ON LOCAL JUDGE

CLEVELAND, TN. (November 20, 2025) — On November 19, 2025, deputies with the Bradley County Sheriff's Office responded to a report of an assault involving a local judge in a residential neighborhood in Cleveland, Tennessee.

A local judge reported, while walking their dog on the side of the road in a neighborhood, they were alarmed by a rapidly approaching vehicle driven by Joshua Dale Phillip Sanford and hastily moved out of the way, fearing that both themselves and their dog would be struck. The driver then reversed and re-approached the judge in an aggressive manner, prompting further fear for personal safety.

Sanford reportedly made comments that placed the judge in fear that he was going to retaliate for past actions. He was later located and arrested. Sanford was charged with aggravated assault and retaliation for past actions and is being held without bond in the Bradley County Jail pending his arraignment on November 21st, 2025 in Bradley County General Sessions Court.

Additional information will be released as it becomes available. No victim information will be released at this time due to this being an active case.

About BCSO

The Bradley County Sheriff's Office (BCSO) is a law enforcement agency serving all residents of Bradley County, Tennessee. The elected sheriff is Steve Lawson, who has held the post since September 2018. John Stone is the current chief deputy. BCSO is located at 2290 Blythe Avenue SE, Cleveland, TN 37311 and can be reached at 423-728-7300 for non-emergency calls.
