

Commonwealth of Virginia

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CA STEVE DESCANO AND FCPD CHIEF KEVIN DAVIS ANNOUNCE BRENDAN BANFIELD INDICTED IN DOUBLE MURDER

Banfield charged with murdering his wife, Christine Banfield, and other victim Joseph Ryan

Fairfax County, VA — Commonwealth's Attorney Steve Descano announced today that a Grand Jury has indicted Brendan Banfield for murdering two people, including his wife, in their home in February 2023. Based on the results of a 19-month investigation along with new information recently obtained by the detectives in this case, Banfield was indicted on four charges of aggravated murder¹ and one charge for the use of a firearm in the commission of a felony. Aggravated murder carries a life sentence without the possibility of parole, while the firearm charge carries a mandatory minimum of 3 years.

Banfield, 39, is alleged to have stabbed his wife, Christine Banfield, 37, and shot Joseph Ryan, 38, on the morning of February 24, 2023. The family's live-in au pair, Juliana Peres Magalhaes, 24, was arrested in October 2023 and charged with murder and the use of a firearm in the commission of a felony for the death of Joseph Ryan. She has remained in custody since her arrest.

"Early last year, a double murder devastated two families and shocked our entire community," CA Descano said. "I will ensure that my office puts forward the strongest case possible at trial, and that we continue to seek justice for the victims and their families. I am grateful to the Fairfax County Police for their thorough investigation and close partnership with Deputy Commonwealth's Attorneys Eric Clingan and Kelsey Gill on this case."

"On February 24, 2023, I stood in the middle of a cul de sac street in Fairfax County and described the deaths of two persons inside of a residential home. This much is clear: we have

¹ Virginia Code Section 18.2-31 contains multiple subsections that define aggravated murder. A grand jury has returned indictments under two subsections that could be considered by a jury: Under the first, murder is elevated to aggravated murder if more than one person is killed as part of the same act or transaction; under the second, murder is elevated to aggravated murder if more than one occurs in a period of less than three years.

evidence to now allege that Christine Banfield's life was unlawfully taken and Joseph Ryan's life was unlawfully taken," said FCPD Chief Davis. "To the Benson and Ryan families, a special thank you for your patience and continued prayers."

Banfield is expected to be arraigned later this week. A court date is set for September 19, 2024. A criminal indictment is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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