

Trial begins in Beatrice Abuse Case

BEATRICE, Neb. (AP) - Prosecutors say the case against a former worker at a Nebraska center for developmentally disabled adults is about "fundamental rights" of the residents.

Matthew Pangborn is charged with six counts of abuse of a vulnerable adult and four counts of strangulation. He was charged after an investigation last year at the Beatrice State Development Center.

His trial began Monday in Gage County District Court. Prosecutors agreed to drop one count of strangulation prior to the trial.

In opening statements, County Attorney Roger Harris said residents were trusted to the care of the state, which in turn trusted them to care workers.

Defense attorney Brett McArthur says he'll try to discredit witnesses he says have something to gain by Pangborn's conviction.

Testimony, which began Monday afternoon, continues on Tuesday.

Associated Press