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Guilty Verdict in Beatrice Abuse Case

BEATRICE, Neb. (AP) - A 31-year-old man has been convicted of abusing residents at a state-run center for developmentally disabled people.

The Beatrice Daily Sun says the jury found Matthew Pangborn guilty of several counts of abuse of a vulnerable adult and of strangulation.

The jury deliberated for about four hours on Wednesday, stopping around 9 p.m. Members resumed deliberating Thursday morning.

Pangborn was charged with beating and choking residents when he worked at the Beatrice State Developmental Center last summer.

Sixteen employees were suspended after an investigation found that at least seven of the center's developmentally disabled residents were routinely slapped, shoved, violently pinched, punched, ridiculed and choked. Five workers were initially charged with abuse.

Pangborn was the only one to face trial, after the four others pleaded to reduced charges.

Associated Press