

Larry Jones Fired From Feed the Children

✖ Feed the Children President Larry Jones was fired Friday from the ministry he founded 30 years ago. He is expected to file a wrongful termination suit this week.

The organization's board of directors did not give a reason for voting to terminate Jones' employment "effective immediately," according to *The Oklahoman*. Jones' wife, Frances, was not terminated.

(Photo: Larry Jones with wife Frances at feeding outreach in New York)

The firing came after Jones admitted to police that he authorized the installation of hidden microphones in three executives' offices last April, including his daughter's. Larri Sue Jones is Feed the Children's general counsel.

The termination is the latest in an ongoing battle over who is in charge of the Oklahoma City-based compassion ministry. Last December, Jones had several directors removed from the board and had top executives fired, including his daughter, after learning they planned to force him to take a sabbatical.

A judge reinstated the leaders, and in August a lawsuit about the power struggle was settled when Jones agreed to give up operation control.

In April, Jones had hidden microphones installed in the offices of his daughter, the chief financial officer and the chief operating officer, two of his attorneys told *The Oklahoman*. A private investigator found traces of the devices in the ceilings of the offices and got Oklahoma City police involved.

Jones' attorney said his client had the microphones installed

to record his own conversations when he was in those offices. David Ogle, who specializes in criminal defense cases, told the Oklahoma City newspaper that ministry executives had misrepresented Jones' comments in the past.

In Oklahoma, it is legal to secretly record one's own conversations, but it is illegal to bug offices or listen in on others. It is not clear whether Jones will face charges for the hidden microphones.

Ogle said Jones passed a polygraph test last week about his intentions for the recording devices. Another attorney, Mark Hammons, told *The Oklahoman* that Jones would have to be convicted of a felony for authorizing the microphones in order to be fired for it.

"I did nothing wrong there," Jones told *The Oklahoman*. "I knew what the law was. ... They used wiretapping as the excuse [for the termination]."

Jones is worried that the ministry will see greater declines in giving this year because of the firing.

"I was in such shock," he told the newspaper. "I thought they had enough foresight to see that this is by far the best time of the year to raise money. ... This makes absolutely no sense - none at all. Already, people are calling, saying, 'Larry, if you're not at Feed the Children, we're not going to do these projects.' ... Thirty years of hard work down the drain."

Hammons sent a letter to Feed the Children Friday demanding that directors remove Jones' name, likeness and voice from all advertisements.

The ministry reportedly collects more than \$1 billion in donations each year; records show Jones was paid \$230,323 annually, *The Oklahoman* reported.