

Pima County won't prosecute Tucson officers in prostitution ring

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2015 Cops solicit prostitution Tucson- not prosecuted

TUCSON — Several Tucson police officers accused of being involved in a prostitution ring will not face charges, according to a letter issued by the Pima County attorney.

The letter issued in September but made public on Thursday says chief deputy county attorney Kellie Johnson didn't find enough evidence that the eight officers and one police crime-scene technician had engaged in an act of prostitution.

The Arizona Department of Public Safety recommended misdemeanor charges of solicitation for a prostitute for some of the officers after conducting a criminal investigation. The Tucson Police Department conducted an internal investigation that resulted in the firing of four officers and the crime-scene technician.

The Department of Public Safety investigation found that six Tucson police officers made or attempted to make appointments at two illicit massage parlors where sex was offered as a service.

One officer had been seen entering one of the businesses for his appointment and leaving 40 minutes later. Another officer communicated with one of the businesses by phone and text message dozens of times, according to the Department of Public Safety. Others made appointments via text message, although it's not clear whether the officers actually attended their appointments. None of the officers agreed to interviews with the department.

In addition to the six, two other officers and a crime-scene technician were listed as contacts with one of the businesses.

The investigation began in November 2014 after police began receiving citizen complaints about an illegal massage business known as "By Spanish." Detectives learned that a second massage business known as "Daisy's Delights" was also operating illegally and offering sexual acts to clients. The businesses advertised on a website.

On Jan. 15, investigators spotted an off-duty Tucson police officer entering one of the businesses and leaving 40 minutes later. Police obtained search warrants and on Jan. 27 collected the cellphones of the owners of both businesses.

In one text-message exchange, an officer who was approaching an apartment where he had an appointment said he was turning back because he felt he was being watched.

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