

Officer among 19 arrested in Houston prostitution sting

By Craig Hlavaty

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2016 Cop Solicit prostitute Tony James Sellers

On Friday afternoon Harris County Constable Mark Herman's office released details of an undercover prostitution sting carried out in tandem with the Harris County Constable's Office Precinct 1 earlier this week in north Harris. A total of 19 people were arrested, including an HPD officer.

The operation was conducted to crack down on supposed prostitution and the johns feeding the industry near a local school and day care centers.

HPD Officer Tony James Sellers, 46, was charged with prostitution. He was released after posting \$500 bond. The Houston Police Department has confirmed he has been relieved of duty with pay pending the outcome of the criminal case and HPD's internal review.

Sellers is a 20-year HPD veteran and was most recently assigned to the Northeast Patrol Division.

Undercover law enforcement posed as male johns to solicit sex for money from prostitutes working the area. Female undercover officers also posed as prostitutes to catch male johns seeking to pay for sex.

Nineteen people were arrested and charged with prostitution or soliciting prostitution in the sting.

"The businesses and citizens of north Harris County along the FM 1960 corridor have made it clear that they refuse to idly stand by, and allow their communities to deteriorate to the point where street level prostitution is openly displayed and acted out on a daily basis," Herman said in a statement.

Reporter Mike Glenn contributed to this report.