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# Lawyers: Cops charged in sex assault guilty only of bad judgment

By Jason Meisner and Jeremy Gorner | Tribune reporters  
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A veteran Chicago police officer was charged with sexually assaulting two women in separate attacks just weeks apart in March while he was on duty and in uniform, and his partner was accused of raping one of the alleged victims.

Cook County prosecutors said the officers offered each victim a ride home as they patrolled near Wrigley Field in their marked police SUV in the early morning hours of their overnight shift.

At least one of the women was heavily intoxicated at the time, authorities said.

Officer Paul Clavijo, 38, was charged in the sexual assaults of a 26-year-old woman on March 10 and a 22-year-old woman on March 30. He was also charged with official misconduct in both incidents.

Officer Juan Vasquez, also 38, was charged with sexual assault and official misconduct in the March 30 case. Authorities said Vasquez was present during the March 10 assault, but he was not charged in that incident.



(Phil Velasquez, Tribune)

Chicago police relieved both officers of their police powers March 31 and said at least one of them was under criminal investigation for the previous day's alleged sexual assault. At the time, an outraged Terry Hillard, the interim police superintendent, noted he was a father as he criticized their conduct as "inappropriate -- you can't justify it."

Attorneys for the two officers, both 10-year veterans of the police force, said Thursday that their clients were guilty only of bad judgment.

Jon Loevy, a lawyer for the woman allegedly assaulted March 30 by both officers, blasted the claim, calling it an "outrageous way to spin this."

"These are on-duty police officers," Loevy said. "They were armed with guns. She was a young woman who was not in a situation where she had a choice."

Clavijo remained in Cook County Jail on Thursday night on \$500,000 bond, but Vasquez was released after the required 10 percent of his \$500,000 bond was posted. The short, balding officer walked briskly past a throng of reporters without answering questions and jumped into a waiting SUV.

State's Attorney Anita Alvarez said the officers "essentially destroyed" their oath of office.

"As citizens, we are all expected to follow the orders of police officers and to respect their authority," Alvarez said. "These officers committed an extremely offensive violation of that trust, luring vulnerable young women into a situation that should have been protective."

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