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« Officer Damon A. Jefferson charged sexual assault »

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Topic: Officer Damon A. Jefferson charged sexual assault (Read 116 times)



Officer Damon A. Jefferson charged sexual assault

« Thread Started on Jun 10, 2006, 10:49am »

06.09.2006 - MOUNT HOLLY--A Trenton police officer was charged yesterday with sexual assault, attempted aggravated sexual assault, and endangering the welfare of a child, announced Burlington County Prosecutor Robert D. Bernardi.

All three are second-degree offenses. The suspect, Damon A. Jefferson, 32, of Pemberton, faces up to 30 years in state prison if convicted, Bernardi said in a statement.

Jefferson, a seven-year veteran of the TrentonPolice Department, was placed on administrative leave, according to a statement released by city Police Director Joseph Santiago.

"No further decision about Officer Jefferson's duty status will be made until the officer surrenders for arrest Monday morning and I have further discussion with the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office," Santiago said.

Bernardi's spokesman, Jack Smith, wouldn't reveal the age or gender of the victim.

"In mid December, 2005, the victim, a juvenile under the age of 13, disclosed to his/her mother that he/she was the victim of a recent sexual assault," said Bernardi's statement.

"The crime was reported to the Pemberton Township police who notified the Sexual Assault/Child Abuse Unit of the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office," he said.

The two agencies embarked on a joint investigation that resulted in yesterday's charges, 18 months later.

" ... On more than one occasion between May 2005 and December 2005 the victim was ordered to disrobe by the defendant and was then assaulted by him," Bernardi's statement said.

No other details are being released -- including the location and nature of the assaults or how the defendant and victim are known to each other -- in order to maintain the anonymity of the victim, Bernardi said.

County Superior Court complaint warrants were issued yesterday, and bail of \$75,000 was set by Judge John A. Almeida.

TPD spokesman Peter Page wouldn't provide a photograph of Jefferson: "We're not obligated," he said. He suggested getting it from Bernardi's office, then hung up.

Smith said Jefferson's mug shot will be available after the defendant surrenders at 9 a.m. Monday in the company of his lawyer, Scott Krasny.

Jefferson has been a subject in prior newspaper stories.

On June 29, 2005, The Trentonian reported that the previous Tuesday, an ambulance and a police car collided at Hudson and Pearl streets, with resulting heavy damage to both.

Police Spokesman Detective Sqt. Pedro Medina said the ambulance had its headlights activated as it responded to a call in the 200 block Pearl Street, running the wrong way east on Pearl from Clinton Avenue.

When the ambulance entered the intersection of Hudson and Pearl, it was struck in the driver's side rear fender by an unmarked undercover TPD car. driven by Jefferson, Medina said. No one was injured, and no summonses were written.

An Aug. 2, 2001 story reported that three Trenton police officers -- Jefferson one of them -- who allegedly bought stolen DVD players from a patrolman refused to cooperate with an internal investigation, according to testimony at the patrolman's Mercer County trial.

"They refused to talk to me," testified Lt. Albert Paglione, the county detective in charge of the probe. He testified the patrolman had told him he'd sold stolen DVD players to Jefferson and the others.

Paglione testified: "I told him [Jefferson] there would be consequences if he chose not to cooperate, but he chose not to cooperate."

Then on Sept. 21, 2000, Officer Douglas Moreland was reported by police to have taken a couple of shots at stolen car suspects who allegedly tried to run over him and his partner, Damon Jefferson.

No further information was available last night. Jefferson's attorney, Scott Krasny, did not immediately return a request for comment, nor could Jefferson himself be reached.

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