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Former Hayward officer sentenced for molesting teenage boys

March 15, 2008 | By Henry K. Lee, Chronicle Staff Writer

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(03-14) 15:56 PST HAYWARD — A former Hayward police officer who pleaded no contest to two counts of oral copulation with a minor has been sentenced to more than two years in prison, his attorney said today.

Jeff Cristofani, 42, was ordered by Judge Kevin Murphy of Alameda County Superior Court to serve two years and eight months in prison, said the ex-officer's attorney, Terry Bowman.

The sentence, which the judge handed down March 4, was the maximum that could be imposed as a result of Cristofani's no-contest plea in October. Legally, pleading no contest is the same as pleading guilty, but the conviction cannot be used against Cristofani in a lawsuit.

Cristofani must register as a sex offender for having oral sex with one boy in December 2001 and another in April 1997. He resigned from the Hayward Police Department in April after an 18-year career.

In exchange for Cristofani's plea, prosecutors dropped three other charges, including another oral-copulation count and two counts of intimidating or dissuading a witness.

"Jeff has always felt very strongly about taking responsibility for his actions, and although he is disappointed with the length of the sentence, he looks forward to getting past this and moving on with his life in a positive direction," Bowman said.

Police said Cristofani had threatened to shoot a 17-year-old boy if he told anyone that the former officer had molested him. Cristofani had also been accused of telling the boy to keep a second victim quiet.

The allegations came to light last year when one of the boys agreed to meet with Cristofani and carry a hidden tape recorder.