

## KOMO News

# Ex-Border Patrol agent pleads not guilty to child rape

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Joseph Giuliano

BELLINGHAM, Wash. - Joseph Giuliano, the former high-ranking Border Patrol official accused of having sex with a 14-year-old girl, pleaded not guilty to third-degree child rape Friday.

Giuliano, 55, made the plea during his arraignment in Whatcom County Superior Court, and the judge set a trial date of Jan. 20 in the case.

Up until two weeks ago, Giuliano was the No. 2 man in the local Border Patrol. Now he is in jail on suspicion of raping the high school girl, who was a

friend of the family.

Police say Giuliano admits he had sex at least 24 times with the girl.

Mac Setter, chief deputy prosecutor for Whatcom County, alleged in court last week that Giuliano had sex with her for the last time on Oct. 13, after police had already visited the girl's high school and had told Giuliano that he was under investigation, at which time he denied anything was happening. Setter says later, the girl told police they had sex later that same night.

For this reason, prosecutors asked for an unusual \$50,000 cash-only bail.

"The reaction is total disgust," said Whatcom County Sheriff Bill Elfo. "This is totally reprehensible that a high-ranking law enforcement official in a position of trust would exploit a child in this manner."

The victim told detectives she had been involved with Giuliano. She said they arranged meeting times by communicating through text messages. The two met in his car, in her bed and at his house, she said.

When questioned by detectives, Giuliano admitted to having had sexual intercourse with the victim on at least 24 different occasions, according to the statement of probable cause. He said their relationship began in April 2008 and continued until recently.

At times, he told the girl it was wrong and feared he would get caught, the statement said.

The victim is not related to Giuliano, who is married. Giuliano's wife was not aware of the alleged abuse, according to Whatcom County Chief Criminal Deputy Prosecutor Mac Setter.

Giuliano had been a Border Patrol agent for more than 20 years and as deputy chief has overseen operations in Western Washington, Oregon and Alaska.