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Deputy sheriff pleads guilty to sexually assaulting child

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By Minna Sugimoto - [bio](#) | [email](#)

HONOLULU (HawaiiNewsNow) - A man's career as a Hawaii sheriff is coming to a disgraceful end. The long-time deputy will lose his job after pleading guilty to sexually assaulting a child Wednesday.

Edwin Salinda has been on paid administrative leave. But given his guilty plea, the state Department of Public Safety, which oversees Hawaii's sheriffs, says it's now moving to sever the relationship.

A deputy sheriff sat cross-armed in an Oahu courtroom -- not to provide security, but preparing to admit that he's a child molester.

"He feels horrible for what happened and he's just trying to make right," Jonathan Burge, defense attorney, said.

A woman told investigators her uncle, Edwin Salinda, committed various sexual acts on her starting when she was in the first grade. According to the indictment, they took place between 1992 and 1996.

"He had a dark cloud over his head all these years," Burge said. "He's dealing with it as anybody should that does this. At some point, you've got to come to grips and take responsibility."

"Are you admitting to all of these facts?" Dexter Del Rosario, Circuit Court judge, asked.

"Yes, your honor," the defendant replied.

The 56-year-old pleaded guilty to four counts of second-degree sex assault, which are reduced charges under a deal with prosecutors. The resolution means the victim will be spared the rigors of a trial.

"It just saves everybody the pain that would happen if they had to go to trial on something like this," Burge said.

Under the plea agreement, Salinda sidesteps a 10-year prison term and, instead, will be sentenced to one year in jail and five years probation.

"Is he getting help to understand why it took place?" this reporter asked.

"He's seeking help for all of that and he's going to follow through and, you know, just make sure that nothing ever happens like this again," Burge replied.

Salinda has been with the sheriff's division for nearly two decades.

"I wish him the best...but we have to sever the relationship," Jim Propotnick, public safety deputy director, said following the guilty plea.

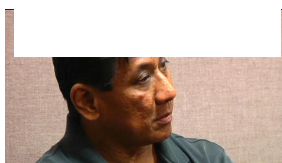
"He's had a long career as a sheriff that basically is going away as a result of this," Burge said.

Salinda is currently on supervised release. His sentencing is set for September 1st.

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Edwin Salinda



Jonathan Burge



Circuit Court Judge Dexter Del Rosario



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