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Victorville deputy takes plea in Explorer teen sex case

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July 13, 2011 3:26 PM

Tomoya Shimura
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VICTORVILLE • A Victorville sheriff's deputy accused of engaging in sexual acts with a teen Explorer took a plea bargain Wednesday afternoon and faces nine months in jail.

Anthony James Benjamin, 30, of Beaumont accepted the prosecution's offer and pleaded no contest to two felony counts of oral copulation of person under 18. Judge Lynn Poncin accepted the plea agreement while the victim watched in court.

Benjamin is scheduled to be sentenced Aug. 30 to 270 days in jail. Under the law, the defendant's not required to register as a sex offender.

According to the complaint, the two incidents took place on or about July 1 through Dec. 18 against the victim referred to as Jane Doe, who's now 18.

If he had gone to trial and been convicted of all charges, Benjamin could have faced up to three years and eight months in prison.

Benjamin declined to talk to the Daily Press outside the courthouse after the plea. He's been free on \$100,000 bail.

An anonymous tip led to Benjamin's arrest last month and he was placed on administrative leave, according to sheriff's officials.

Benjamin worked as a deputy at the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Victorville station, and had been with the department for more than five years, according to sheriff's officials.

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Photo courtesy San Bernardino County District Attorney's office
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