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Harrodsburg DARE officer indicted on 148 counts of sex abuse

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HARRODSBURG — A Mercer County grand jury on Wednesday indicted a Harrodsburg police officer on 148 counts of felony sex offenses.

Jason Elder, 31, of Harrodsburg was indicted on two counts of third-degree rape, 48 counts of third-degree sodomy and 96 counts of first-degree sexual abuse, according to the indictment.

The indictment is the result of a Kentucky State Police investigation. Detective Brandon Curlis, who is listed as the witness who testified before the grand jury, was not immediately available for comment.

The rape counts say that Elder engaged in sexual intercourse with a person younger than 18 from November 2007 to November 2009.

The sodomy counts say Elder engaged in "deviate sexual intercourse with another person" younger than 16 from November 2007 to November 2009.

The sexual-abuse counts say that Elder "subjected a minor who is less than 18 years old to sexual contact," using "his position of authority or special trust" from November 2009 through November 2010.

Elder is listed as the officer who conducts Drug Abuse Resistance Education in the Mercer County school district. It is not known whether the contact with the victim or victims in the indictment resulted from Elder's position as a DARE officer.

Harrodsburg Police Chief Rodney Harlow was not available for comment Thursday morning.

All 148 counts are Class D felonies, each punishable by one to five years in prison.

Elder is scheduled to be arraigned June 21 in Mercer Circuit Court before Judge Darren Peckler. A special prosecutor, Tim Cocanougher of Springfield, has been appointed in the case.

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