

# Former cop jailed for sex assault of 14-year-old

By Laurie Mason Schroeder Staff Writer | Posted: Friday, December 20, 2013 6:00 pm

A former Philadelphia police officer who sexually assaulted a 14-year-old girl in a Bensalem hotel room last year was sentenced Friday in Bucks County Court in Doylestown to six to 20 years in a state prison.

Anthony Dattilo, 37, will also be a registered sex offender for the rest of his life. County Judge Jeffrey Finley rejected Dattilo's request for house arrest, saying his crime unfairly disparaged all police officers.

“When an officer soils his badge like you did, it creates a distrust in the public of law enforcement,” Finley said. “I can't emphasize enough how that breach of trust causes problems that you can't even imagine. Problems for fellow officers, and problems for the community.”

Dattilo wept as he stood before the judge. He apologized for embarrassing his family.

“I used poor judgment. I just hope that God forgives me and everybody else forgives me.”

Dattilo, a 12-year veteran of Northeast Philadelphia's Second District and a former deputy Philadelphia sheriff, was arrested in May 2012 after the victim sent text messages to family members saying she was being held against her will at the Lincoln Motel on Lincoln Highway in Bensalem.

The family members called police, and Bensalem officers went knocking door-to-door in the motel, looking for the teen.

Dattilo answered his door and immediately identified himself as a police officer, saying “I'm with the Second.” He was arrested.

Police later learned that the teen had been visiting her 21-year-old cousin that night and the older girl received a telephone call from Dattilo. Court records say Dattilo had paid the woman for sex in the past, and that night offered her \$100 for intercourse.

The older cousin — who was also arrested and is awaiting trial — told Dattilo that she was with her “little cousin.” Dattilo offered to pay an additional \$100 for sex with the teen, court records say.

Dattilo, of Gillespie Street, picked the girls up in their North Philadelphia neighborhood and drove them to Bucks County. He had sex with the older cousin while the younger girl was in the same room, then began to touch the 14-year-old, prosecutors say. Police interrupted the sex assault by knocking on the door.

Dattilo pleaded guilty in June to aggravated indecent assault, unlawful contact with a minor, promoting

the prostitution of a minor and related charges.

In court Friday, Dattilo's attorney, Jack McMahon, asked the judge for leniency. He noted that Dattilo takes care of his elderly parents, who are both infirm, and spared the teen from testifying at a trial by pleading guilty.

“Hopefully, we do not define Anthony Dattilo by the worst day of his life. He is otherwise a person of good character.”

First Assistant District Attorney Michelle Henry argued that Dattilo deserved a lengthy prison term. She said the victim, who was not present in court because her family could not find transportation to Doylestown, remains traumatized by the assault and has trouble trusting people in authority because her attacker was a police officer.

Henry said Dattilo was well aware that the girl was 14.

“This man was charged with protecting citizens and upholding the law. Instead, he disgraced law enforcement and sexually assaulted a child.”

McMahon called the sentence “very unfair” and said he will speak to his client about filing an appeal. He said the judge should have given Dattilo more credit for admitting his guilt and not forcing a trial, and said he would counsel other clients against pleading guilty in Bucks County.

“Quite honestly, I'm shocked,” he said after the sentencing. “I'm very disheartened by it all.”