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## Bradford school resource officer accused of sex with student

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A former Bradford County sheriff's deputy has been arrested on charges of having sex with a teenage girl while he was on duty as a high school resource officer at the girl's school.

Johnny Lamart Hernandez, 36, of Hampton, was arrested Tuesday on three counts of sexual activity with a minor, according to an arrest report. Hernandez was already in jail on domestic violence and child neglect charges.

Hernandez's arrest "has special concern on several levels," State Attorney Bill Cervone said Tuesday.

"There is the alleged inappropriate sexual contact between an adult and minor," he said. "There is also the overlay of this suspect being a law enforcement officer, who you would expect to be above reproach."

Bradford County Sheriff's officials said they were notified about the sexual allegations against Hernandez on Nov. 10 by officials with Bradford County High School in Starke. Sheriff's officials said the girl, a student at the school, was 16 when the alleged activity began and turned 17 at some point before the relationship ended.

Also on Nov. 10, Hernandez was suspended with pay pending the results of an internal administrative investigation. Sheriff Gordon Smith asked the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to assist in the criminal investigation.

According to the sheriff's office, Hernandez was fired Nov. 23 for "failing to cooperate with an investigation" by refusing to show up for an interview about the allegations.

On Jan. 25, the internal investigation was completed, Capt. Brad Smith said, and found that Hernandez had violated departmental policies by conduct unbecoming a deputy, failure to follow general orders and dereliction of duty.

At 10:16 p.m. on Jan. 25 — before Hernandez had been notified about the findings of the investigation — he was named as a suspect on charges of aggravated child neglect and domestic battery.



Johnny Hernandez

“He turned himself in the next day after we had issued a statewide (alert) for him,” Capt. Smith told The Sun.

Smith said Hernandez is being held at an undisclosed area jail for his own protection.

Bond for Hernandez in the domestic case was set at \$110,000. Officials said he was in court on Tuesday requesting that his bond be lowered, but his request was denied.

Shortly afterward, FDLE agents completed their criminal investigation and Hernandez was arrested on three counts of unlawful sexual activity with a minor. His bond in the most recent case has been set at \$300,000.

According to agency personnel records, Hernandez was hired as a patrol deputy in June 2009 and was named a school resource officers in August 2010.

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