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## Officer is accused of sexual battery

BY TIM POTTER  
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A Wichita patrol officer has been charged with committing sexual battery while on duty in two separate incidents, an emotional police chief said Wednesday.

"No one — no one — is above the law," including police officers, Police Chief Norman Williams said at a City Hall news conference Wednesday shortly after prosecutors filed charges against Officer Joseph McGill.

"I'm highly disappointed; I'm highly disturbed by this," Williams said.

Officers have died in the line of duty while wearing the uniform and the badge, and now the same symbols are tainted by the allegations, he said.

"That's probably the hardest decision I've had to make as chief, is to say, 'Book him.' "

But neither the department nor the community can tolerate actions like those outlined in the charges, he said. The charges say there were two different victims.

Although Williams didn't identify the officer by name, according to the charges, he is Joseph T. McGill, 27. City records show McGill was hired in June 2007.

He is married and the father of four children, 7 months to 5 years old, according to the financial information he filed in requesting that he be represented by the Public Defender's Office.

Police arrested McGill on Tuesday, and he was booked into jail that night, records show.

He was being held on a \$25,000 bond Wednesday and has a March 16 preliminary hearing, which is likely to be postponed.

He faces two charges: felony aggravated sexual battery in an alleged incident early Sunday, and misdemeanor sexual battery in an alleged incident Nov. 19.

The felony charge says that McGill "unlawfully and intentionally" touched the victim to satisfy his sexual desires when the person was "overcome by force or fear."

Late Wednesday afternoon, McGill wore an orange jail jumpsuit as he listened to the charges against him through a video connection between the jail and a courtroom.

He is suspended without pay pending the outcome of the legal proceedings, Williams said.

Williams said the officer had been accused of "inappropriate contact" with a resident while on duty early Sunday morning. A police report said the incident occurred between 1 and 1:30 a.m. in the street in the 200 block of North Exposition, near Second and Seneca. The incident was reported Sunday afternoon.

Williams declined to comment on the age or sex of the alleged victims. The charges say each victim was 16 or older.

At the time of the alleged crime early Sunday, Williams said, the officer was in uniform and driving a marked patrol car during his normal shift.

Police had been investigating the November allegations prior to Sunday's complaint, Williams said.

Both residents came forward "and made us aware" of the allegations, Williams said.

The chief said he couldn't remember the last time a Wichita police officer had been charged with such serious crimes.

"It's been a long time," he said.

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