

Former probation officer charged in sex sting

By Associated Press 9:12 a.m. Jan. 9, 2014
Jan. 9, 2014

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MISSOULA, Mont. (AP) — A former juvenile probation officer in northwestern Montana was among seven suspects recently arrested for allegedly responding to an online ad in which a woman was purportedly willing to make a 12-year-old girl available for sexual encounters, officials confirm.

James Stewart Myers, 54, of Superior was arrested on Dec. 18 on felony child sex abuse charges after prosecutors say he gave \$100 to an undercover detective as pre-payment for the encounter.

Glen Welch, the chief juvenile probation officer for Missoula and Mineral counties, tells the Missoulian (<http://bit.ly/1hzljTQ>) that Myers retired about six months ago, after seven years as a juvenile probation officer in Mineral County.

Welch said his office is investigating to "make sure there haven't been prior problems with the kids up there."

Deputy Missoula County Attorney Jason Marks said he is unaware of anything that would lead to additional charges against Myers.

A man who answered the phone at a listing for James S. Myers in Superior hung up when reached by The Associated Press on Thursday.

Myers appeared in Justice Court on Dec. 20 and remains free after posting a \$50,000 bond. His District Court arraignment on the felony child sex abuse charge is set for Jan. 21 in Missoula.

As part of the sex sting, law enforcement officers posted advertisements on Backpage and Craigslist that appeared to be from a woman willing to make a 12-year-old relative available for sexual encounters.

Charging documents said Myers traveled to the address used by undercover officers.

Before being hired in Montana, Myers was a sheriff's deputy in California's San Bernardino County, a county representative confirmed.