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Tuesday, April 9, 2013

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12:19 pm - April 05, 2013 — Updated: **9:45 pm** - April 06, 2013

Officer charged with statutory rape

By RIC BOHY rbohy@c-dh.net

A Mt. Pleasant police officer was arrested and charged early Friday morning with statutory rape by an authority figure for an alleged sexual encounter with a 16-year-old boy.

Officer Jason Paul Jones, 25, of Columbia, was booked into the Maury County Jail at 1:25 a.m. before being released on \$75,000 bond about three hours later.



Jones

Columbia police recently received a complaint "that there was possible

sexual contact between the officer and the 16-year old" at Jones's home, Capt. Kenny Brady said. "We started investigating and were able to come up with enough probable cause that we were comfortable with getting a warrant for his arrest."

Officials said Jones was taken into custody at the Mt. Pleasant Police Department, where he was working the night shift.

Mt. Pleasant Police Chief Tommy Goetz said Jones has worked for his department for about two years, including time as a reserve officer, and was most recently assigned to the K-9 unit.

"He is on administrative leave without pay until Monday, when we will look at this again," Goetz said of the arrest. The chief declined any other comment.

Brady said the alleged sexual encounter was not forcible.

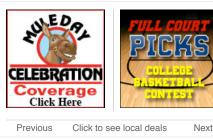
"From the information we have so far, there didn't appear to be any physical force," Brady said. "It seemed the encounter was consensual."

The fact that the suspect is a fellow law enforcement officer makes the case more difficult, Brady acknowledged, but not different in any other respect.

"As far as we're concerned, we got the complaint and handled this like any other investigation," he said. "We're out for the truth.

"Like any investigation, we hoped nothing would come of it," he continued. "But we got probable





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cause."

Statutory rape by an authority figure is defined in part by Tennessee law as the "unlawful penetration of a victim by the defendant or of the defendant by the victim when the victim is at least 13 but less than 18 years of age."

In addition, the charge requires that the offender is "in a position of trust, or had supervisory or disciplinary power over the victim by virtue of the defendant's legal, professional, or occupational status and used such position of trust or power to accomplish the sexual penetration."

The crime is a Class C felony carrying penalties upon conviction of 3-15 years in prison without the possibility of probation and a fine of up to \$10,000.

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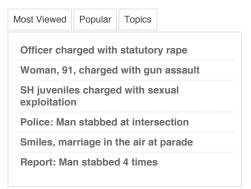
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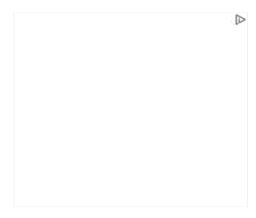
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