

# Deputy charged with child molestation

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CONYERS -- A Rockdale County Sheriff's Office deputy was booked on aggravated child molestation charges Thursday afternoon following his arrest by the Conyers Police Department.

According to the RCSO, Joseph Robert Harding, 23, of Conyers was terminated Thursday afternoon following the child molestation accusations reported in Conyers.

Harding was arrested by the Conyers Police Department on Thursday following an investigation into claims that he molested a juvenile female who was an acquaintance in April.

The Rockdale County Sheriff's Office was made aware of the investigation and conducted an internal investigation. Harding was terminated following the internal investigation. He had worked in the Rockdale County Jail since September.

Harding is charged with aggravated child molestation and aggravated sodomy. He is being held in a neighboring county jail without bond.

"We worked with the Conyers Police Department as they conducted their investigation and swiftly terminated Harding following his arrest," said Sheriff Eric Levett. "Unfortunately, this is another example of an employee not representing the Rockdale County Sheriff's Office in the high standard of conduct and professionalism that the citizens of this county deserve."