

No bond reduction for corrections officer in sex assault case

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Following a hearing Tuesday, a Shawnee County District Court judge denied a defense motion to reduce the bond of a man charged with sexually assaulting a 4-year-old child from a \$50,000 to a \$5,000 to \$10,000 bond.

Defendant Aaron Kalka, 40, of Auburn, is charged with aggravated criminal sodomy of a victim younger than 14 by an offender older than 18, according to court records. Kalka was booked into jail March 27.

District Court Judge Cheryl Kingfisher ruled she would neither raise nor lower Kalka's bond. It would remain \$50,000, she said. As of Tuesday, Kalka remains a Shawnee County corrections officer, who was placed on unpaid leave after he was arrested.

Also as of Tuesday, Kalka remained in jail in lieu of a \$50,000 cash or surety bond.

In addressing whether Kalka was a flight risk if released on bond, Kingfisher said he had been a productive member of society so far, but a conviction of aggravated criminal sodomy would carry a life sentence, and that is an "inherent potential flight risk."

In seeking a lower bond for his client, attorney James Heathman said the victim made an allegation against Kalka, then recanted, and there is a tremendous amount of information that Kalka is "not guilty."

As to whether Kalka is a danger to others or himself and whether he is a risk to flee the area if released on bond, Heathman said Kalka has significant family ties in the area, including his wife, children, an ex-wife and others.

The judge could place Kalka on GPS monitoring, Kalka could live with his mother, and he could be ordered to not have contact with children and to have monitored contact with his own children, Heathman said.

Nothing shows Kalka is a danger to the community or anyone, Heathman said, acknowledging Kalka had an assault case 12 or 13 years ago.

Senior assistant district attorney Matt Patterson said \$50,000 was an "extremely reasonable bond" based on the gravity of the case, noting the victim was 4 when the incident occurred. Court records said the girl was assaulted in Shawnee County on Oct. 1.

In opposing the bond reduction, Patterson wrote that police reports "indicate that the defendant perpetrated the same crime against the same victim on a previous occasion in Wabaunsee County."

Police reports also indicate Kalka "confessed to two different detectives from the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department that he had, in fact, done the criminal act" of aggravated criminal sodomy charged in Shawnee County, Patterson wrote.

Kalka is to appear at a preliminary hearing May 5.

A Shawnee County corrections department official said last week the alleged crime didn't occur while Kalka was on duty or to anyone associated with the Shawnee County Jail.

Kalka is under the custody of Shawnee County but is being housed in the Lyon County Jail because of his ties to the Shawnee County facility.

The corrections department official earlier said Kalka wasn't moved due to safety issues but to eliminate concerns Kalka would receive special treatment because of his employment.

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