

## Former SRO Faces More Child Sex Charges - WLOS News13 - News - Top Stories

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A mountain SRO accused of having sex with a 15-year-old girl in Macon County is now charged with the same crime in Swain County. 32-year-old David Peterson was arrested Tuesday and charged with statutory rape.

Court documents are shedding more light on this case. Investigators with the SBI have searched Peterson's home and they've also seized cell phone's belonging to him and the 15-year-old.

A probable cause affidavit filed by the SBI outlines exactly how deputies found out Peterson was allegedly having a sexual relationship with a minor. It says early on February 10th, the sheriff's office responded to a disturbance where a 15-year-old girl was trying to hurt herself with a knife. Family members told investigators that two days earlier, a guy named David picked up the girl and the two stayed out all night. They also told deputies they found pictures on her cell phone of the two laying on a bed together.

Court documents show Chief Deputy Jason Gardner viewed the photos and recognized the shirtless man as a recent hire at the sheriff's office. The sheriff office says Peterson was only two weeks on the job as an SRO at East Elementary School, but was previously a science teacher at Swain County High School.

The affidavit also includes an interview with the 15-year-old at Swain County Hospital. She told investigators she and Peterson had been in a sexual relationship and they had sex at several different locations and times. Court documents say detectives collected bedding from Peterson's Bryson City home, which were tested for DNA. The 15-year-old girl also admitted to texting Peterson several naked photographs of herself.

Peterson was initially charged with statutory rape when evidence of an affair popped up in Macon County. But he was then arrested Tuesday in Swain County. Peterson is being held on \$200,000 bond in Swain County. Macon County officials have revoked his bond and have requested he be held until a hearing next week.

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## Swain County SRO Faces Child Sex Charges