

Trial date set for former officer charged with child rape

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Former KCSO officer Dennis Mills was arraigned in Knox County Criminal Court on Friday, on seven counts of rape of a child, rape by an authority figure, and incest.

The judge set a trial date for February 9th, 20-15.

Previous story

The personnel file of former Knox County Sheriff's Office Lieutenant Dennis Mills Jr., 43, shows during his career at the sheriff's office he was assigned to fight crimes against children.

He is in jail now, charged with raping a child.

In July, Dennis Mills, Jr. would have reached 20 years of service with the Knox County Sheriff's Office. But Tuesday, his former co-workers and investigators with the TBI arrested him.

A grand jury indicted Mills on seven counts of rape of a child, rape by an authority figure, and incest. Court documents shows the abuse lasted for a year before the child came forward in early March. That's when the sheriff's office placed him on administrative leave and TBI launched an investigation.

Records show Mills started in corrections at the Knox County jail and worked his way up to patrol. In 2000, he worked on the juvenile crime task force- a unit that investigates and arrests adults accused of abusing children. The unit also works with children to reduce the number of juvenile crimes. One supervisor wrote Mills is "One of the brightest young men I have ever worked with" in an evaluation.

When the sheriff's office terminated him Tuesday, he was a lieutenant in the warrants division who consistently scored above average to average on evaluations.

Knox County Sheriff "JJ" Jones requested Mills be moved out of the Knox County Jail to avoid any favoritism. He's being held in the Blount County jail on a \$250,000 bond.