

Broward sheriff's deputy arrested for having sex with teenage girl, police say

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A Broward sheriff's deputy was arrested Thursday for having sex with a teenage girl starting when she was 15, Lauderdale police said. Investigators said he had sex with the girl multiple times, once involving a whip and putting her in a collar on a leash, over the course of more than two years.

Leon Campbell, 36, was charged with four felony counts of lewd or lascivious battery and one count of sexual activity with a minor. She was the niece of one of his friends, according to police documents.

The arrest followed a five-month investigation, after the unnamed victim's

grandmother and aunt first reported Campbell to Lauderhill police in May. The victim had moved in with her aunt in 2015 where she first met Campbell, a family friend of the aunt, according to an arrest affidavit.

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According to a statement the aunt gave to police, both the victim and Campbell began to spend time together shortly after the girl moved in, sparking her suspicions when they began to have long phone calls and interact closely. The grandmother said she became concerned about their interactions when she saw Campbell inappropriately touch the victim's chest during a family gathering under the pretext of checking her temperature.

Unknown to members of the victim's family, Campbell repeatedly had sex with the girl over a two-year span, starting shortly after her 15th birthday at his home in Lauderhill, where he lived with his parents at the time.

The two exchanged hundreds of phone calls late at night and while the girl was attending high school. The aunt said in a statement to police that she warned Campbell to curb his interactions with the victim and that he denied any illicit behavior when confronted.

In March 2017, the victim stayed with Campbell for a few days after having an argument in her aunt's home and leaving with some of her belongings. She did not return home for multiple days, prompting her family members to file a missing person report with the Davie Police Department.

According to partially redacted statements in the arrest affidavit, the victim told someone that she stayed with a friend for the first night, then spent two more days with the sheriff's deputy. Campbell "tied her up, spanked her with a whip and put a collar around her neck with a leash attached," according to the arrest affidavit.

Family members were unaware of the sexual interaction at the time, but shortly after the incident, the aunt warned Campbell that she was going to block his phone number from the teenager's phone, and the victim moved in with her grandmother.

The victim's family members became aware of the alleged sexual relationship in May, after which they reported the deputy to police.

In a three-way phone call with the aunt before the report was filed, Campbell admitted he had slept with the victim and apologized. He told her "the relationship hadn't started that way" and that he had told the girl "they had to stop their relationship because of his job," according to the aunt's statement.

Lauderhill police opened an investigation and obtained a search warrant for Campbell's home. The search turned up multiple adult items, including a whip that had traces of DNA that matched that of the victim, according to the affidavit. The investigation also revealed hundreds of long phone calls between the deputy and the victim.

Campbell turned himself in Thursday afternoon to Lauderhill police and was transferred to the Broward County Jail.

BSO spokeswoman Gina Carter [told the Sun Sentinel](#) that Campbell had been with the force for nearly a decade and worked out of the Pompano Beach district. He will be suspended without pay, she said.

"Deputy Leon Campbell's actions are a reflection of himself and not the hard-working, dedicated men and women of the Broward Sheriff's Office," Sheriff Scott Israel said in a statement to the paper.

He was held on a \$15,000 bond, according to records.