

Astatula police sergeant arrested for sexually molesting child, deputies say

[Jason Ruiter](#)



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Timothy Palinski was arrested and charged with capital sexual battery of a child under 12 years old, according to the arrest report.

An Astatula police sergeant — who served as a Cub Scout leader — was arrested Wednesday for sexually molesting a boy, the Lake County Sheriff's Office said Thursday.

Timothy Alan Palinski, 43, was charged with capital sexual battery of a child under 12 years old, according to an arrest report.

Palinski began to sexually abuse the victim when he was 7, the report said. "Visibly shaken" and crying as he talked to investigators, the victim first reported the abuse to a school resource deputy and counselor Tuesday, the report said.

"It's a shock, but that's the only thing I want to say at this time," Astatula police Chief Walter Hoagland said. Palinski has been employed by the Astatula department, which has nine officers, for 17 years and is on unpaid leave, pending the outcome of the case, Hoagland said.

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The victim said he has "attempted suicide with the Defendant's firearm because of the abuse," the report said.

The boy asked Palinski to stop, but said the abuse continued, the report said.

Pornographic DVDs and other items were "found under a false shelf in the gun safe where the victim indicated," the report said.

"This victim has proven to be strictly credible, and the detectives have found no reason whatsoever to doubt his testimony," Lake sheriff's Lt. John

Herrell said. "In fact, everything he provided to detectives they were able to somehow verify."

Herrell said deputies were trying to figure out when Palinski was employed with the Sheriff's Office, where he was detention deputy at the jail. "It was a while ago," Herrell said.

Detectives also found Cub Scout items during a search of the home Tuesday, Herrell said.

"We would be interested in hearing from any parents whose children have spent time alone with him," he said.

Palinski served as Cubmaster for Pack 254 in 2013, according to an earlier Orlando Sentinel article. He was transferred Thursday to the Sumter County Jail, a "standard procedure any time we have a law enforcement officer arrested here ... it's more of a protocol for their safety," Herrell said.

The boy's age is unclear, but Palinski also was charged with lewd and lascivious battery of a child from 12 years old to under 16, the report said. He was being held without bond.



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Jason Ruiters covers Lake County people, government and crime for the Orlando Sentinel.

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