

# Maine deputy accused of abusing girls fired

AUGUSTA, Maine (AP) — A onetime “Deputy of the Year” in Maine who faced charges of sexually abusing three girls has been fired.

Authorities say 47-year-old Kenneth Hatch, of Whitefield, was fired from the Lincoln County Sheriff’s Office following an internal investigation.

Hatch was charged with sexual abuse of a minor, unlawful sexual contact and furnishing marijuana for offenses prosecutors say happened between 1999 and 2014. Hatch had been on unpaid leave since he was charged in June 2016.

Jurors acquitted Hatch of two felony counts in November, but deadlocked on the remaining 20 felony counts.

In an announcement Tuesday, Lincoln County Sheriff Todd Brackett says he could not see how Hatch could function as a police officer, given the circumstances.

Hatch can appeal the decision. Numbers listed for him were not in service.