

## Fired Berthoud police officer Jeremy Yachik pleads guilty to child abuse, seeks probation

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LOVELAND, Colo. - Fired Berthoud police officer Jeremy Yachik pleaded guilty Friday to one count of child abuse of a 15-year-old girl.

Yachik is now scheduled for sentencing in the case on July 14 at 8:30 a.m. He is seeking a sentence of supervised probation.

Yachik was fired last October after he allegedly admitted to the abuse. The case also led to the resignation of Police Chief Glenn Johnson.

According to court records, the girl told Loveland police investigators that Yachik abused her almost daily for years. The abuse allegedly included restraining her hands with handcuffs or plastic zip ties and then slamming her head into a wall hard enough to leave a hole and choking her until she blacked out, according to a Loveland Police Department arrest affidavit.

The girl also said he beat her with ropes, restricted her food, shackled her in a darkened room for hours and force-fed her "ghost pepper sauce" that's roughly 10 times hotter than habanero peppers, the affidavit said.

During a voluntary Sept. 27 interview with Loveland investigators, Yachik, who is 5 feet 11 inches tall and weighs 270 pounds, admitted doing many of these things to the girl, the affidavit said. The officer also confirmed he was the man shown in the video abusing the teen in July 2012.

Asked why he did these things, Yachik told investigators the teen "won't communicate" with him, the affidavit said. He didn't cite anything the girl had done to warrant these punishments, police wrote.

Yachik was arrested on Oct. 23 on a warrant charging him with four counts of child abuse resulting in injury and one count of false imprisonment, all misdemeanor charges, according to police records. He pleaded guilty to one count of misdemeanor child abuse (pursuant to Alford.) That means he's says he's not guilty, but understands there is a good chance of conviction if the case were to go to trial. In the eyes of the court that's the same as a regular guilty plea.

The former officer declined comment following today's court hearing.

His attorney told the court they are seeking probation. Prosecutors the sentence is totally up to the judge, they are making no recommendation regarding a jail sentence.

After Yachik was fired and the police chief resigned, Berthoud did away with its police department and contracted with the Larimer County Sheriff's Office for law enforcement services.