

## Alachua deputy takes plea in battery case

By

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### 2015 Cop Domestic Violence Russell Johnson

An Alachua County sheriff's deputy who was charged after a domestic altercation with his girlfriend in November pleaded no contest to simple battery Thursday in an agreement with the State Attorney's Office.

Russell Johnson, 46, resigned from the sheriff's office effective Thursday and will permanently give up his law enforcement certification, said Darry Lloyd, spokesman for the state attorney.

Also, Johnson will have no contact with the woman and will be on probation for a year. Johnson must get a mental health evaluation and counseling. He must also pay restitution, Lloyd said.

The State Attorney's Office filed charges of false imprisonment of his girlfriend after the Alachua Police Department had earlier filed a sworn complaint against him alleging domestic battery, false imprisonment and tampering with a witness.

Johnson, during the dispute with the woman, reportedly handcuffed her and restrained her legs with shackles, an investigative report said.

A criminal investigation began when Johnson's girlfriend flagged down a passing Gainesville police officer on Nov. 7 and asked for help. The case was turned over to the APD because it was in the city of Alachua.

Alachua police reported that Johnson and the woman argued after looking through each other's cellphones. Both had been drinking alcohol.

Johnson began calling the woman names, the report said. She tried to leave with her dog but Lee reached into her car, got the keys and threw the keys and her cellphone into nearby woods, the report states.

The woman tried to run to a neighbor's house but Johnson reportedly forced her back into the house. The report said she grabbed a small pocketknife while he threatened her.

Police alleged Johnson bound her arms and legs, hog-tied her by looping a belt through the handcuffs and shackles, and told her she was under arrest. Johnson left her for 30 minutes before putting her in his patrol car, the report said.

They eventually went back inside the house, where Johnson made her sleep with his gunbelt between them, the report said. She left the next morning and flagged down an officer.