

Former Utah narcotics officer charged with drug crimes

[2014 Distribute Drugs/Don Henry Johnson/Narcotics Officer Weber-Morgan UT](#)

Ogden • In a case that could have repercussions for drug prosecutions in northern Utah, a former agent on the Weber-Morgan Narcotics Strike Force has been charged with two counts of second-degree felony drug distribution.

Don Henry Johnson, 29, was charged Friday in 2nd District Court in Farmington. Each count carries the possibility of one to 15 years in prison. As of Tuesday afternoon, no hearings had been scheduled and Johnson had not yet appeared in court to enter a plea, a docket shows. There also was no record online of him having been booked in the Davis County jail.

An attorney for Johnson did not reply to a message seeking comment

Court documents accuse of Johnson — who worked for the Ogden City police department — of twice soliciting a woman to hire a man to buy him the pain killer Oxycodone somewhere in Weber County. The episodes happened sometime in May and again on July 5.

The documents say Johnson promised the woman money but did not pay. The woman later reported what happened to law enforcement.

The investigation was referred to Layton police, who interviewed the woman and a male witness and, according to court documents, found phone records corroborating the communications between the group.

Johnson was an Ogden police officer assigned to the narcotics strike force at the time of the alleged offenses.

Weber County Attorney Chris Allred said Tuesday that the charges against Johnson have already forced his office to dismiss the charges against one defendant, and prosecutors are reviewing whether more cases must be dismissed.

"We don't know exactly how it will impact all of them because we have a lot of cases with Don Johnson right now," Allred told The Tribune. "We will just have to look at them on a case by case basis."

Allred said the issue could be whether prosecutors have other witnesses who can testify about what occurred in those cases.

The case that was dismissed was against Leonard Russell Marion, who in November was shot and wounded by police inside an Ogden restaurant after he allegedly shot at the officers.

Johnson had investigated Marion, 36, for allegedly selling methamphetamine and marijuana from a West Haven motel room where two children under the age of 3 were present.

Despite the dismissal, Marion remains charged with first-degree felony aggravated attempted

murder in the police shooting case, as well as another drug-related case and a case in which he allegedly failed to respond to police.

Ogden Assistant Police Chief Wayne Tarwater said during a press conference Tuesday that Johnson was assigned to the task force for about a year ending in September of 2014.

Ogden police became aware of the accusations against Johnson the next month, Tarwater said.

Ogden hired Johnson in August 2008. He resigned on Jan. 15.

Tarwater said that from October until Johnson's resignation, Johnson was on an "extended leave" for an unrelated reason. When asked if Johnson was being paid during that time, Tarwater said Johnson was "on his own time."

Tarwater said that neither Ogden nor the Task Force had conducted an internal investigation because they were waiting for Layton to finish its investigation. However, Tarwater said, there was no indication of missing evidence or the coercing of witnesses by Johnson.

"The reality is there are individuals that are going to lose their way," Tarwater said of his reaction to the charges.