

Public Affairs Bureau



Sheriff Hunter's Position Statement on Jail Deputy's Resignation

A Collier County Sheriff's Office corrections deputy resigned amid an internal affairs investigation into claims by three female jail inmates that he made sexually explicit comments, touched them inappropriately and had sex with one of them while on duty.

Corporal Louis Aguinaga resigned not in good standing prior to the closing of a Collier County Sheriff's Office internal affairs investigation into the women's allegations. The Sheriff's Office released the findings Thursday, November 13, 2008.

The investigation found Aguinaga failed to comply with CCSO rules and regulations during the internal investigation because he refused to provide a sworn statement. Because Aguinaga did not provide a sworn statement the most egregious allegations remain unanswered and open.

The Sheriff's Office is not offering the identities of the three women because of the sexual nature of the allegations.

According to the investigation:

- A 24 year-old woman alleged that she was in a court holding cell on March 25 when Aguinaga approached her and made sexually explicit comments.
- A 36 year-old woman alleged that she was in a court holding cell in November 2007 when Aguinaga entered the cell and made sexually explicit comments and touched her inappropriately.
- A 35 year-old woman alleged that Aguinaga touched her inappropriately while she was in a court holding cell and then forced her to have sex in an inmate transit stairwell attached to the jail while he was escorting her back to the jail in October 2006.

Sheriff Don Hunter said that the criminal and internal investigations were hampered by the significant delays in the reporting of the alleged misconduct as well as Aguinaga's refusal to cooperate.

The Sheriff's Office pursued criminal charges against Aguinaga, but the State Attorney's Office declined to prosecute due to insufficient evidence to prove a crime beyond a reasonable doubt.

Sheriff Hunter stated the following, "While the alleged conduct is not unique to the Collier County Sheriff's Office or exclusive to any organization in our society today, we will not tolerate the type of conduct alleged and we refuse to permit even a gradual decline in our high standards. We will continue to ferret out misconduct and take appropriate action against those individuals responsible. While the Collier County Sheriff's Office has in place the most rigorous screening procedures permitted by law we know from experience that character flaws are not traits that can be consistently assessed and future behavior cannot be accurately predicted. We will continue to investigate any and all allegations of misconduct and take appropriate action against the individual".

We are reviewing and further hardening the security, surveillance procedures and hardware of the jail to further preclude breaches in our protocols.

The Sheriff's Office will forward its investigation to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission for review and appropriate action.