

## Multnomah deputy arrested on sexual misconduct, drug charges

by Richard Burton

A corrections deputy and 25-year veteran with the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) was arrested Tuesday evening and is accused of official misconduct, custodial sexual misconduct, and possession of cocaine, authorities reported.

Erich Watson's MCSO photo

57-year old Erich Watson of Portland was taken into custody, placed on administrative leave, booked into the Multnomah County Detention Center, then transported to an undisclosed jail outside of the county, said Lt. Jason Gates.

Watson is charged with first-degree official misconduct and second-degree custodial sexual misconduct both Class A misdemeanors, and possession of cocaine a Class C felony, the lieutenant reported.

His arrest resulted from an ongoing investigation by the East County Major Crimes Team (MCT) comprised of detectives from MCSO and Gresham, Troutdale, and Fairview Police Departments. The Multnomah County District Attorneys Office has also been involved, Gates said.

"This case is still under investigation and our obligation to the public dictates that the integrity of the investigation be preserved," Lt. Gates said. "Maintaining our long standing commitment to transparency, however, our office has made the decision to release this information in order to keep the public informed and conserve their trust that we are diligently investigating this serious issue involving one of our members."

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