



TULARE POLICE DEPARTMENT



PRESS RELEASE # 16-009

April 29, 2016

City Employee Arrested

In February of 2016, the police department hired the independent consulting firm of Evidence Control Systems, Inc. to conduct an audit of the property and evidence function of the Tulare Police Department. This audit was conducted to meet the recommendations of the Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training for the State of California. The commission recommends that an evidence audit should be conducted when there is a change in command at the Chief of Police level.

During an evidence inventory conducted subsequent to the audit, it was discovered that items of evidence were missing or tampered with. On Tuesday 4-26-16 both of the evidence technicians responsible for maintaining the property and evidence room were placed on administrative leave pending a criminal and internal affairs investigation. At the request of the Tulare Police department; the Tulare County Sheriff's Office is conducting the independent criminal investigation.

On 4-29-16 approximately 8:20 PM, Gary Coffman an 18 year civilian employee of the Tulare Police Department's Evidence unit was arrested on suspicion of embezzlement, evidence tampering, and possession of controlled substances. The second evidence technician remains on administrative leave pending the outcome of both investigations.

This is an ongoing criminal and internal investigation. For the integrity of the two separate investigations, no further information will be released at this time.

When further information develops, I will provide an additional press release. I have no further information to provide.

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