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## Local News

# Police officer takes plea deal for unlawful arrest

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (WSVN) -- A South Florida police officer copped a plea for an alleged unlawful arrest outside a convenience store back in 2009. More than three years later, it cost him his badge.

Caught on camera, an officer in a gray shirt man-handled a customer at a convenience store and now, according to a judge, he used excessive force. "He basically battered him," said Prosecutor Adriana Alcalde-Padron, "Against his will and you know, the victim hadn't really done anything except be at a 7-Eleven."

The victim, Lee Ferrell was wearing a blue shirt the day of the incident. The surveillance video was taken Dec. 6 at a 7-Eleven just off Oakland Park Boulevard.

The clerk inside, told the 26-year-old to leave because they had seen him shoplift before. The police officer, Jason Hersh, who was standing right next to him got involved. "She told the guy to leave," said Girolette Jean, "And then the guy she was serving asked him, 'Do you really want him to go outside?', and she said, 'Yes'."

Then, Hersh dragged Ferrell out of the store. "He didn't have to put him in a full nelson and drag him out like an animal," said a man.

The clerk went outside shortly after and said the police officer pulled out his gun and pointed it at her. "He just took it out like this," said Jean, "And said, 'Go back inside the store!' and so I came back inside the store."

In Hersh's reports, he said Ferrell was the one who acted aggressively and called him a profane name. However, in court Wednesday, a judge decided the opposite. "He was convicted of the battery," said Alcalde-Padron, "He's got a year in probation and he gives up his certification. This is not the kind of person we want protecting the citizens. This is the kind of person we want to make sure is not in a position of power."

Part of the plea deal is that he was convicted and he will have to serve 12 months of probation.

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