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[West U. Police Officer Fired, Facing Felony Charges](#)

Wed, Oct 28, 2009

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A police officer from West University Place was fired last month and now faces two felony charges that could each bring 2-to-10 years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

Nelson Hernandez, who is still appealing his Sept. 18 termination from the West U. Police Department, is charged with two counts of tampering with a governmental record after he allegedly fabricated the reasons he pulled over two cars. Video footage from his in-car camera showed a different story than Hernandez allegedly wrote in his report, according to a complaint the police department filed with the Harris County District Court.

Hernandez is the second officer since October 2008 that the department has fired after in-car video footage allegedly showed that things the officers reported had not actually happened. Tomorrow, InstantnewsWestU will have details on the first officer who was fired.

"Police officers have to have integrity," said West U. Police Chief Ken Walker. "When they

testify in court we have to believe them or feel comfortable that they're telling the whole truth and not exaggerating anything ... We will not tolerate dishonesty."

According to the criminal complaint, the first charge stems from a traffic stop on June 12 that resulted in an arrest because the driver had an invalid license. Hernandez allegedly wrote in his offense report that he pulled over a vehicle traveling eastbound in the 4200 block of Bissonnet Street for having a broken brake light. But when the police department reviewed Hernandez's in-car video from that time, they saw his car was parked three blocks away at Northwestern Street and Bissonnet Street, facing westbound.

"The Defendant's ability to observe a brake light violation of a vehicle traveling eastbound, or even to be able to observe the vehicle entirely in the 4200 block of Bissonnet from this location would not have been possible," the complaint says. "This is due to the distance, street angles, direction of travel, and visual obstructions that exist in this particular area."

The video went on to show the car passing by Hernandez's parked patrol car, and the officer pulling it over in the 3800 block of Law Street in Houston's city limits. Not in the 4200 block of Bissonnet Street in West U., as Hernandez allegedly wrote in the offense report.

"The defendant's actions were done with the intent to defraud and harm another," the criminal complaint said.

The second charge of tampering with a government document stems from a traffic stop on June 26. This driver was also arrested for driving with a suspended license. Hernandez's report states he pulled a large truck over in the 5300 block of Sewanee Street. When the West U. Police Department reviewed Hernandez's in-car video, they saw the officer first started following the truck on Bissonnet Street, and then turned onto Sewanee Street to pull it over. Hernandez allegedly reported the probable cause for the stop was a broken brake light.

"On three separate occasions during the recording, twice on Bissonnet and once on Sewanee, the vehicle's brake lights were engaged with both brake lights showing to be in proper working order each time they were applied," the criminal complaint said.

The criminal case against Hernandez was filed Sept. 9, and he was just arraigned yesterday. The grand jury still needs to hear the case to determine whether there is enough evidence to move forward with the trial.

"It's a rare moment that a case is accepted by the [district attorney's] office and it's not indicted," said Paul Aman, Hernandez's attorney appointed through the Texas Municipal Police Association, a trade organization. Aman said he only recently started becoming familiar with the case.

"I'm in the process of really getting to look at the [district attorney's] file this week,"

Aman said. "We're still in the early stages."

As the criminal case progresses, Hernandez has an administrative hearing tomorrow with the city of West U. to appeal his termination. City Manager Michael Ross will meet with Hernandez and the police chief to hear both sides, and Ross will decide whether or not to rescind the termination.

Around this time last year, another West U. officer was fired because in-car video footage showed she allegedly lied about getting hit by a car and injured while she was directing traffic. In response to an InstantnewsWestU public information request, the city delivered a report from an internal affairs investigation about the incident.

Check InstantnewsWestU.com tomorrow for details about that case. Note: [You can now read this story here.](#)

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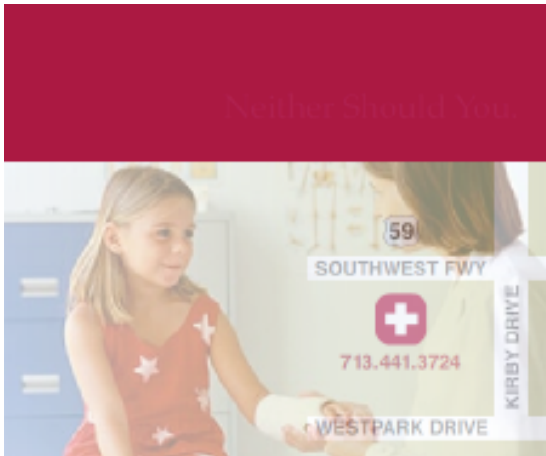
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