

Chester County District Attorney's Office

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PRESS RELEASE

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PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE CORPORAL ARRESTED FOR OBSTRUCTION AND TAMPERING OF RECORDS

The Chester County District Attorney's Office and Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) announce the arrest of PSP Corporal Jennifer Ruhl, 50, of West Chester, for the charges of obstructing administration of law, unsworn falsification, tampering with public records or information, and hindering apprehension or prosecution. Corporal Ruhl, who has been a PSP trooper for 23 years, attempted to conceal a DUI arrest involving the father of another PSP trooper.

District Attorney Deb Ryan said, "This investigation demonstrates that no matter who you are, no person is above the law, and everyone must be held accountable. We hold law enforcement to the highest standards, and the defendant betrayed her sworn oath with these criminal acts. Law enforcement must continue to police their own, just as Pennsylvania State Police did here."

The allegations in the complaint are the following¹:

On November 26, 2019, two PSP troopers stopped the driver of a car for erratic driving in Lower Oxford Township, Chester County. Based on tests administered by the troopers and other observations, the driver was arrested for Driving Under the

¹ A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

Influence (DUI). The driver was taken to Jennersville Hospital to have blood drawn and transported to PSP Avondale Station, where he was photographed and fingerprinted.

While at the Avondale Station, the driver informed one of the arresting troopers that his son was also a PSP trooper. This information was reported to the defendant, who was the patrol unit supervisor that night.

The arresting troopers were summoned to the defendant's office, where they were questioned about the arrest and whether they were aware of the driver's relationship to another PSP trooper. One of the arresting troopers acknowledged that he knew the driver had a son on the PSP force.

The evidence collected in connection with the case was then processed following police protocol. NMS Labs in Horsham, PA, tested the driver's blood sample and sent a report back on December 11, 2019. The report, however, went missing despite confirmation that it was received at the Avondale Station. It was requested again on January 15, 2020. The report indicated the blood alcohol level was .093%; the legal limit for operating a vehicle is .08%.

On January 2, 2020, the defendant instructed a Police Communication Officer (PCO) to change the name of the arresting/investigating officer for the case to hers even though she was not at the scene of the DUI.

A month later, on February 6, 2020, the defendant instructed another PCO to change the classification of the DUI investigation to a "towed vehicle." Then on February 14, 2020, the defendant prepared and submitted another report that changed all the information to include that the driver of the vehicle was not impaired. On April 13, 2020, a fax from the Avondale Station to the PSP Bureau of Records and Information indicated that the original information contained in the report about the driver's arrest for DUI was incorrect and that no charges would be filed.

The defendant is currently suspended without pay. She will be arraigned sometime this month. PSP Bureau of Integrity and Professional Standards, Internal Affairs Division, investigated this case with the assistance of the Chester County District Attorney's Office.

Approved for release by Deborah Ryan, District Attorney