

## Arbitrator Reinstates Sheriff's Lieutenant

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FORT LAUDERDALE- An arbitrator has ordered the reinstatement of a former Broward Sheriff's Office lieutenant who was fired for allegedly visiting adult websites and downloading sexually explicit materials on his sheriff's office computer.

"I made him whole," arbitrator William L. Richard said during an interview today. "They will have to return him to his old job and give him back pay and benefits."

The Oct. 4 ruling mandates that Lt. Jim Murray be rehired with full back pay, seniority, pension and other benefits. It also requires BSO to remove from Murray's personnel files all references to the charges to the extent allowable by law, and where they cannot, the ruling must be inserted.

The dollar amount of the ruling has yet to be determined, but it could approach seven figures based on a lieutenant's \$106,000 base annual salary, benefits, pension and the loss of the use of his BSO squad car.

Richard did order a five-day suspension for Murray because he emailed photographs of Capt. Milton Weiner, who works in the Pompano district, to co-workers. Those photographs were taken from a website that Weiner himself had posted online, but they were not explicit or derogatory.

"I did authorize five days suspension without pay and I did that because he did forward these goofy photographs of a co-worker to other co-workers," Richard said. "That's what the disciplinary committee had given other employees for doing the same thing, so I only thought it was fair"

Murray could not be reached and his attorney, Mike Braverman, did not respond to questions.

Nonetheless, the investigation was handled by Internal Affairs Sergeant Mary Guess. Murray was a lieutenant in charge of BSO's Strategic Investigations Division. Among other things, her 2009

investigation concluded he engaged in harassment, visited adult websites while at work and downloaded sexually explicit pictures on his job computer.

The report also accused him of misusing law enforcement databases to spy on co-workers. Her report led to Murray's suspension in October 2009 and eventual firing three months later in January 2010.

"Those accusations were false," Richard said. "If he wanted to watch pornography, he didn't have to visit any sites because investigating that is part of what SID [Strategic Investigations Division] does and their computers are not part of the regular sheriff's office network."

His union appealed the termination through an independent arbitrator. Nearly two years later, Murray's reinstatement has been ordered.

The sheriff's office has yet to comment on the ruling.

\*Pictured above is former Broward Sheriff's Lt. James Murray.