

County DTF agent arrested, fired

DTF agent

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Timothy Anderson (Tim) Butler, on assignment in Gilmer County as Appalachian Drug Task Force county agent, was relieved of his position with his arrest last month on a felony charge.

GBI Agent Kenny Crook took out the warrant for Butler's arrest on December 6, 1994, detailing the alleged offense as "party to crime: invading the privacy of another". Butler was released at the Gilmer county jail after posting a \$5,000 bond.

On Tuesday of this week, the GBI agent took out a second warrant for Butler's arrest, alleging the crime, theft by taking. Another

\$5,000 bond was posted by Butler on the January 10 theft charge.

The actions that led to the initial arrest of the 32-year-old Jasper resident were not related to Butler's assignment as a drug task force agent, and were allegedly in connection with illegal surveillance work of a so-called "private detective" nature.

Accepting any type of secondary employment without obtaining permission is a clear violation of DTF guidelines, according to Appalachian Drug Task Force Agent in Charge John Cagle. Butler was immediately suspended as Gilmer County DTF agent

when his alleged violations of the law came to the attention of his superiors, Cagle added.

After the Appalachian Drug

Task Force Control Board moved to dismiss Butler permanently from the DTF, Gilmer Sheriff Billy Bernhardt

then terminated his employment for the county as a

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deputy on December 9.

In order to become a drug task force agent, a law enforcement officer must first be hired as a county deputy, then nominated by the sheriff as a candidate to become a DTF agent. The final step to securing the position is approval by the DTF control board made up of the sheriffs, district attorneys, state patrol captain and GBI supervisor of the district served.

The Appalachian Drug Task Force is a seven-county organization made up of Gilmer, Fannin, Union, Towns, White, Dawson, and Lumpkin counties.