

Plainfield police officer admits to illegally sharing confidential information

A Plainfield Police Officer has admitted to unlawfully accessing and sharing motor vehicle registration information with a friend, the co-owner of a local tow company, in order to enable that company to seize the title to an abandoned vehicle, acting Union County Prosecutor Grace H. Park announced Thursday.

Christopher Donovan, 37, pleaded guilty to third-degree computer data disclosure before state Superior Court Judge Regina Caulfield. Donovan also immediately forfeited his position as a police officer and is barred from holding future public employment in the State of New Jersey.

A three -month investigation into Donovan' s actions was jointly conducted by the Prosecutor's Office's Special Prosecutions Unit and the Plainfield Police Division Professional Standards Unit, according to Union County Assistant Prosecutor Jeremiah Lenihan, who prosecuted the case.

The investigation revealed that on January 15, 2015, the co-owner of CES Towing, Robert Cubala, a company with a City of Plainfield tow contract, asked Donovan to identify the owner of the vehicle that the company was attempting to seize. Officer Donovan then accessed and shared confidential law enforcement data to facilitate CES in its ability to seek the title for the abandoned vehicle.

Sentencing in the case has been scheduled for April 21, 2017, at which time Donovan is expected to receive a non-custodial probation term of between three and five years.