



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Village relieves police officer of duty in connection with suspected forgery involving elderly resident**

*Cook County State's Attorney's office weighs criminal charges*

ELMWOOD PARK – A Village Police Officer has been placed on administrative leave following allegations that he received a forged \$20,000 check from the account of an elderly resident suffering from dementia. Sgt. John Wasilenko was named in a Citation to Discover Assets filed December 20th by Cook County Public Guardian Robert F. Harris.

The citation alleges that Sgt. Wasilenko developed a relationship with an 85 year-old Elmwood Park resident after Wasilenko had investigated a reported theft at the resident's home in October of 2012. Two months later, the First National Bank of Brookfield reported a \$20,000 check had been written on the resident's checking account and payable to Sgt. Wasilenko. According to the citation, Wasilenko said the resident wanted him to have the money as a gift.

“This is a very serious matter that needs to be fully investigated. There is an ongoing investigation by the Cook County Sheriff's Police Department's Financial Crimes/Public Corruption Unit,” Elmwood Park Police Chief Frank Fagiano said. “We have been cooperating fully with investigators and coordinating with the Cook County State's Attorney's Office of Professional Standards Unit since we learned of this alleged incident back in December 2012.”

Fagiano said that while the investigation had been underway, it was not appropriate to take disciplinary action against Sgt. Wasilenko. “We did not want to do anything that would interfere with the criminal investigation. Wasilenko has been closely watched since we learned of this incident. I have been in constant communication with the State's Attorney's Office, offering any assistance possible.” Fagiano added, “Now that the Citation to Discover Assets has been made public, we believe it is in the best interest of the Village to relieve Wasilenko of further duty while the investigation is finalized.”

The police department is not aware that Sgt. Wasilenko was involved in any other alleged exploitative activity, according to Fagiano. “At this time, as far as we know, this is an isolated

case.” Fagiano said. The Cook County State’s Attorney’s office is weighing charges against Sgt. Wasilenko. “These matters are complicated and time consuming, but it appears from the timing of the Public Guardian’s complaint that the Sheriff’s investigation is substantially complete,” Fagiano added.

Fagiano urged Village residents to take elder abuse and exploitation very seriously and to please report any signs of abuse to Police Department Command Staff immediately.

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