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L.A. County Sheriff's Deputy is Charged with Assaulting Ex-Girlfriend with a Handgun

A Los Angeles County sheriff's deputy has been charged with assaulting his ex-girlfriend with a handgun after he initially stuck the weapon in his mouth and pulled the trigger, authorities said Thursday.

Sean Paul Delacerda, 26, of Fullerton was charged Tuesday with using a firearm to assault his ex-girlfriend after accusing her of cheating, the Orange County district attorney's office said.

Delacerda faces one felony count each of assault with a firearm, kidnapping, false imprisonment by violence and one misdemeanor count of domestic violence battery.

On Sunday, Delacerda allegedly entered the Fullerton home of the woman, whom he had dated for two months, without her permission. She was not home, prosecutors said.

When she arrived, Delacerda pulled out the gun, loaded one bullet into the cylinder and forced the woman to show him her e-mails. The woman tried to flee as the deputy was reading the messages, prosecutors said.

Delacerda allegedly tackled the woman, climbed on top of her and covered her mouth as she screamed. He then put the gun in his mouth and pulled the trigger -- it clicked but did not fire, prosecutors said.

He then allegedly pointed the weapon at the woman and pushed her into a closet while he continued to pore over her e-mails. She finally escaped in her car and drove away as he chased after her, prosecutors said.

Delacerda was arrested a short while later. If convicted, he faces up to 18 years in prison. He is being held without bail and is scheduled to be arraigned May 7 at the Fullerton courthouse.

[Updated at 4:42 p.m.: Delacerda has been relieved of duty while the criminal case proceeds, and an administrative investigation will be conducted after the criminal proceedings end, said Sgt. Edmundo Hummel of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.]