

East Chicago police officer reinstated

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16-year veteran of force was guilty of vote fraud

STEVE ZABROSKI
Times Correspondent
Jun 26, 2008

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EAST CHICAGO | A 16-year veteran city police officer charged with vote fraud will be returning to the force as a probationer

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The Board of Public Works and Safety on Wednesday removed 38-year-old Ronald DeCastro from a two-year suspension and reinstated him as a master patrolman -- an entry-level position with the department.

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In exchange, DeCastro agreed to give up any claim to back pay while he was on administrative leave, all his seniority with the police force and accept a one-year probationary period during which he can be terminated without a hearing.

DeCastro was charged in 2006 with four counts of failure to cast or return a ballot in an authorized manner and pleaded guilty to one count in April.

The Schererville resident received a suspended sentence of 60 days in the Lake County Jail and 60 days of probation.

A reinstatement hearing for Officer Lester Chandler Jr., who was acquitted by a jury in January of similar vote fraud charges, is scheduled for July.

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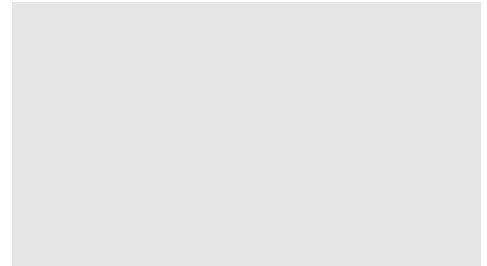
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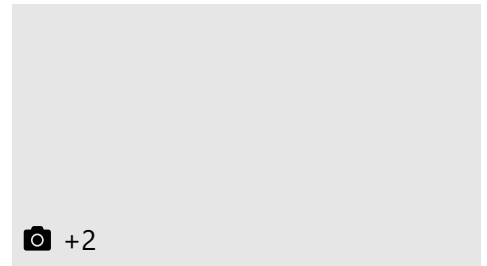
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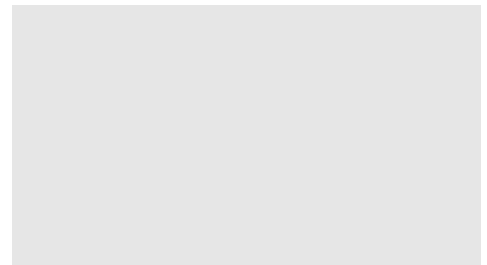
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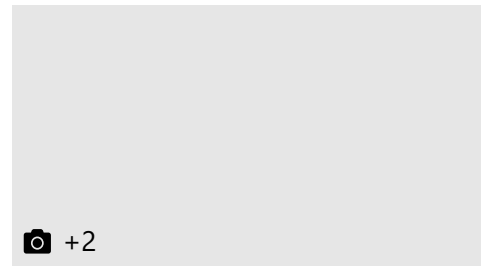
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