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## Counselor accused of abusing teenager

**By Christine Clarridge**

*Seattle Times staff reporter*

A mental-health counselor is under investigation for alleged sexual misconduct with a teenage inmate at the King County Juvenile Detention Center.

According to authorities, a then-17-year-old boy was serving time at the detention center for assault when he was allegedly abused by the female counselor, who reportedly gave the teen extra privileges and gifts, such as additional phone time and snacks.

Seattle police said the allegations are being investigated by an officer with the Special Assault Unit.

The alleged misconduct was discovered when jail officials intercepted communications between the two, according to a spokesman for the King County correctional facilities.

The counselor, a contract employee through the University of Washington, has been banned from the detention center, said Maj. Willie Hayes of the King County Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention.

Hayes said the allegation is also being investigated internally.

"It's a big deal any time somebody is alleged to have committed sexual misconduct with a juvenile," Hayes said. "We're taking this very seriously."

The current investigation follows the prosecution of four King County corrections officers who were charged with sexual misconduct with inmates.

In July, a former juvenile-detention guard was sentenced to 17 months in prison for having sexual contact with two 17-year-old boys under her supervision at the King County Juvenile Detention Center.

Three male King County Jail corrections officers were also charged and convicted of sexual misconduct with inmates.

Under state law, even consensual sex between inmates and corrections officers is illegal because officers are in a position of control and authority.

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