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KANSAS

Kansas deputy used a Taser on a handcuffed child. He still has his police license

BY KATIE MOORE

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The Kansas Commission on Peace Officers' Standards and Training (CPOST) issues licenses allowing police officers to be employed in Kansas. *Kansas Commission on Peace Officers' Standards and Training*



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A Kansas sheriff's deputy who handcuffed, hogtied and used a Taser on a boy with autism in February can continue to work in law enforcement, according to a state licensing agency.

The [Kansas Commission on Peace Officers' Standards and Training](#) (CPOST) concluded Matthew Honas ["used excessive force multiple times"](#) during the Feb. 23 encounter in Holton, about 90 minutes northwest of Kansas City.

CPOST can issue, suspend and revoke state law enforcement licenses. In Honas' case, the agency issued a reprimand, but allowed him to keep his peace officers' license.

Lauren Bonds, legal director for the [National Police Accountability Project](#), said CPOST's decision puts the public's safety at risk.

"CPOST has again shown that it does not take police violence against civilians seriously," Bonds said in a statement. "It is hard to think of a situation that more clearly demonstrates a person's unsuitability to be a police officer than assaulting a special needs child."

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The incident occurred when Honas, who had worked for the [Jackson County Sheriff's Office](#) in Kansas since 2006, responded to a report that the 12 year old, who was a foster child, was trying to run away.

Honas shoved, elbowed and hogtied the child, CPOST records said. Several police departments across the country [have banned the practice](#) of hogtying because it can restrict a person's ability to breathe.

While the boy was in the patrol car and handcuffed, Honas began to press his jaw pressure points.

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“This appeared to be of a punitive nature,” CPOST said.

About five minutes later, Honas used a Taser on the child, who was handcuffed and shackled. CPOST said the boy was not a threat to Honas or other officers.

The “unreasonableness” of Honas’ actions was compounded because he refused help from two other officers, did not use de-escalation techniques and used inappropriate language with the boy, CPOST said, including threatening to tase him again.

Honas left the department March 3.

Jackson County Sheriff Tim Morse said Honas was dismissed. The sheriff’s office found his use of force to be excessive under the circumstances and policy prohibits excessive use of force.

CPOST said this week that he is not currently employed as a law enforcement officer in Kansas.

The Department for Children and Families said it was aware of the incident, but could not comment further due to privacy rules.

Attempts to reach Honas were not successful.

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