

FEDERAL JUDGE FAVORS GRADY COUNTY SHERIFF IN LAWSUIT FILED BY FORMER
DEPUTY SHERIFF NEAL LOCKE

Former Grady County Deputy Sheriff Neal Locke filed a class action lawsuit against Grady County for age discrimination in March of 2009. According to records Mr. Locke accuses Sheriff Kell for terminating him based on his age. Dockets show Locke was terminated for disobeying a direct order from Sheriff Kell. The order was based on complaints brought to the sheriff's attention of sexual harassment allegations on Neil Locke. Sheriff Kell concluded, Deputy Neal Locke had insinuated inappropriate sexual comments toward women officers and women around the county. To protect the county, Deputy Locke was demoted, put on probation, offered counseling and to not make contact with any of the women who made the accusations. Within minutes Locke went to one of the accusers and confronted her on the allegations. The female officer brought another complaint in fear of her safety to the sheriff. Sheriff Kell immediately terminated Locke for disobeying a direct order. Locke proceeded to accuse Sheriff Kell, after his termination, "I was fired because of my age." In the documents provided, the Sheriff's Department at that time had several Deputies and employees from the range of 46 to 72 years of age. The federal judge granted judgment in favor of the Sheriff. Attorneys for Grady County were granted attorney fees of \$9,129.93 to be paid in full by Neal Locke. Sheriff Kell commented saying; "I am glad the Federal Judge could see through this lawsuit and the truth prevailed over the lies."