

Man accused of shooting deputy granted extra freedom

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BREVARD COUNTY, Fla. —

A man accused of trying to kill a sheriff's deputy won a bit more freedom Monday from a Brevard County judge.

Eleven months removed from a shooting that almost killed a Brevard County deputy, John DeRossett is out on bail and looking for work. Judge Robin Lemonidis granted DeRossett's request to shave four hours off his curfew.

“Look, this is a guy who is actually innocent of what he’s being accused of. He’s a hard worker; he’s worked his whole life. He wants to work now, and he’s being limited, even though he’s out on bond,” said DeRossett’s attorney, Michael Panella.

It was last August that shooting erupted at DeRossett’s Port St. John home. Undercover agents were there to arrest a prostitute, DeRossett’s niece.

Monday, DeRossett said, “They ambushed me; I didn’t ambush them.” Sheriff Wayne Ivey has said the opposite is the case. Deputy Casey Smith wound up with what may be permanent injuries, and DeRossett was accused of three counts of attempted murder of a law enforcement officer.

His attorney shows no interest in negotiating a plea deal.

“I wouldn’t ever want to plea somebody to something they didn’t do,” Panella said.

A Florida Department of Law Enforcement investigation report reached no conclusion on whether the bullet that hit the deputy came from DeRossett’s gun, or from the guns of one of the other officers involved in the shootout.

There is no timetable on when the case will go to trial.