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# Texas sheriff's deputy set to be state's first transsexual officer

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**A**nother milestone was reached Tuesday in the Lone Star state when a Texas sheriff said one of his top deputies would become the first police officer in the state to undergo a sex-change operation.

Bexar County Sheriff Ralph Lopez said he had given the male deputy permission to start wearing a woman's uniform and ordered the other deputies not to razz him about it.

"We should be supportive of a person who is making a drastic individual choice in his life. We have to support the legality and his right to do that," Sheriff Lopez said. Bexar County includes San Antonio.

Sheriff Lopez said there were no records to back his belief that

the deputy would be first transsexual individual among Texas' finest, but said he knew of no others in the state's history.

The deputy, whom Sheriff Lopez identified only as a top lieutenant in the patrol division, has already begun receiving counseling and hormone treatments prior to the sex-change surgery. It is not known when that surgery might take place.

Sheriff Lopez said the deputy would begin wearing women's clothing when his counselors say it is appropriate.

The other officers had been warned to mind their manners, he said.

"We want to think we are professionals and we want to deal with each other, of whatever gender, in a professional and proper manner," he said.