

Thunder Bay police chief placed on administrative suspension

Levesque, 53, charged with breach of trust and obstructing justice

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Thunder Bay police chief J.P. Levesque has been placed on "administrative suspension," according to the city. (CBC)

Thunder Bay's police chief has been placed on, what city officials are calling administrative suspension, after a review by the city's police services board.

J.P. Levesque has been charged with breach of trust and obstructing justice stemming from allegations that he disclosed confidential information concerning Thunder Bay mayor Keith Hobbs.

In a written release Thursday, city officials said the police board reviewed the matter of the charges against Levesque on Thursday and decided on the suspension.

The Police Services Act, the law governing police in Ontario, states that a police chief can be suspended with pay if he or she is charged with an

offence. If a chief is convicted and sentenced to a term of imprisonment, the police board can decide to suspend without pay.

Levesque is also on medical leave, according to the police services board.

During the suspension, Levesque "will not exercise any of the powers vested in him as Chief of Police," the city's release stated.

Police spokesperson Chris Adams told CBC News that deputy chief Sylvie Hauth has "full authority" to fulfil the chief's duties and that the police services board can designate her as acting chief if it chooses.

Insp. Don Lewis has been acting as deputy chief in Hauth's absence, Adams said.

Levesque has been a police officer for three decades and chief of Thunder Bay police since July 2011.

His lawyer has said he will fight the charges and expects to be vindicated.

Levesque is scheduled to appear in court on June 13.