

Newark pastor charged with sexual assault

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by Seung Suh;Eyewitness News

ELIZABETH (WABC) -- The pastor of a church in Newark, New Jersey and one of his few congregants are accused of forcing teenage girls to videotape the pair having sex. 55-year-old Moises Cotto and 37-year-old Brenda Pabon were arrested earlier this week.

According to investigators, Cotto and Pabon allegedly made the girls videotape them having sex and forced at least one girl to strip and pose for pictures. Cotto also is accused of attempting sexually assault one of the girls.

Cotto is a pastor at the Congregation Yahweh at 20 Chester Avenue. He also is affiliated with Yahweh Congregations in Jersey City and Paterson. Pabon is a member of the congregation in Newark. The two began having an affair in 2008 and would meet regularly at the Benedictine Church in Linden where the alleged abuse took place.

It's not clear when the girls first encountered the couple, but the meetings at the motel room continued until about two weeks ago when one of the girls told a parent about the abuse.

Cotto was arrested at his home on Monday. Pabon surrendered to authorities on Tuesday. Both are being held on bail. Cotto is charged with kidnapping, attempted aggravated assault, aggravated sexual assault and endangering the welfare of a minor. Pabon also is charged with kidnapping and endangering the welfare of a minor.

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