

# Former Federal Correctional Officer Sentenced to Prison for Sexual Abuse of an Inmate

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## For Immediate Release

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A former federal correctional officer was sentenced to three months in prison, followed by five years of supervised release – the first three months of supervised release will be on home detention – for sexual abuse of an individual in federal custody. He will also pay a \$1,000 fine, a \$5,000 Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act assessment, a \$100 special monetary assessment, and be required to register as a sex offender and be subject to all sex offender conditions.

According to court documents, between October 2021, and August 2022, Lenton Jerome Hatten, 54, of Tallahassee, Florida, engaged in repeated sexual acts with an inmate while employed as a sports specialist for the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) at the Federal Correctional Institution in Tallahassee (FCI Tallahassee). Immediately after being reported, a forensic examination was conducted of the victim by a sexual assault nurse examiner. DNA evidence confirmed a likely link between Hatten and the victim.

At the time of the report, Hatten was on vacation leave and when made aware, he resigned his position. As such, Hatten had no further contact with inmates.

"As this prosecution demonstrates, the Department of Justice remains dedicated to rooting out sexual misconduct at the Bureau of Prisons," said Deputy Attorney General Lisa O. Monaco. "Any BOP employee who abuses their position of authority and mistreats those in their custody will be held accountable."

"No inmate should ever experience sexual abuse or abuse of any kind at the hands of a Bureau of Prisons employee. My office will continue to aggressively pursue justice for victims of such heinous acts," said Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz.

"Without exception, all people, including those serving sentences in correctional facilities, are entitled to protection of their physical safety and civil rights" said FBI Deputy Director Paul Abbate. "This defendant repeatedly sexually abused an inmate in

his care and thanks to the victim's bravery in coming forward, future abuse has been prevented. Today's case shows that the FBI will investigate anyone who violates federal law, regardless of their position, and hold those responsible for enforcing it to the highest standard."

"The abuse of any inmate by correctional officers is intolerable," said U.S. Attorney Coody for the Northern District of Florida. "Sentences of confinement are imposed to account for the inmate's criminal conduct and afford educational and vocational skills to aid in rehabilitation. The inmate's dignity and safety are not surrendered at the prison door. This office will vigorously investigate and prosecute any officer who violates their oath through abuse of inmates entrusted to their care and custody."

The DOJ-OIG and FBI investigated the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorney James A. McCain for the Northern District of Florida prosecuted the case.