

# Former Federal Correctional Officer Pleads Guilty to Sexual Abuse of a Ward

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**For Immediate Release**

Office of Public Affairs

A former correctional officer at the Federal Medical Center in Lexington, Kentucky, pleaded guilty today before U.S. District Judge Karen Caldwell to sexual abuse of a ward.

According to his plea agreement, beginning on Sept. 3, 2022, through Sept. 19, 2022, while employed as a correctional officer at the Federal Medical Center in Lexington, Kentucky, Dustin B. Sparks, 29, knowingly engaged in a sexual act with an inmate on one or more occasions.

"As this latest prosecution demonstrates through today's guilty plea, the Department of Justice remains vigilant and dedicated to rooting out sexual misconduct at the Federal Bureau of Prisons," said Deputy Attorney General Lisa O. Monaco. "Any employee of the Federal Bureau of Prisons who abuses their authority and mistreats those in their custody will be held accountable."

"The Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General (DOJ-OIG) will continue to aggressively investigate Federal Bureau of Prisons employees accused of sexual abuse of inmates," said Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz. "Today's announcement should send a clear message that this kind of conduct will not be tolerated, and perpetrators will be brought to justice."

"Those charged with the custody and care of inmates have a profound responsibility, both to those in their care and the public," said U.S. Attorney Carlton S. Shier IV for the Eastern District of Kentucky. "We remain steadfast in our efforts to prevent and prosecute criminal misconduct by those entrusted with that grave responsibility."

DOJ-OIG investigated the case, with assistance from the FBI Louisville Field Office.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Zach Dembo for the Eastern District of Kentucky is prosecuting the case.

Sentencing is scheduled for Dec. 19. Sparks faces a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison and up to a \$250,000 fine. A federal district judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines other statutory factors.

The Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP) is committed to rooting out misconduct within its ranks and working with law enforcement partners to prosecute violations of federal law. The numerous FBOP employees working diligently to ensure justice for the victims of sexual misconduct are critical to the Department's reform efforts.