

Ex-Federal Correction Officer Pleads Guilty to Taking Bribes in Exchange for Smuggling Contraband into Federal Jail in Brooklyn

Thursday, January 11, 2024

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of New York

Defendant Provided Narcotics and Cell Phones to Inmates

Earlier today, in federal court in Brooklyn, former federal correction officer Quandelle Joseph, formerly employed by the United States Bureau of Prisons (BOP), pleaded guilty to receiving bribes in exchange for providing contraband to individuals detained at the Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC) in Brooklyn. Today's proceeding was held before United States District Judge Dora L. Irizarry. When sentenced, Joseph faces up to 15 years in prison. Joseph resigned from the BOP during the pendency of the case.

Breon Peace, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, and Ryan T. Geach, Special Agent-in-Charge, Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General, Northeast Region, announced the guilty plea.

According to court documents and facts presented at the guilty plea proceeding, Joseph became a correction officer at the MDC in May 2020. During his employment, Joseph accepted tens of thousands of dollars from inmates in exchange for smuggling narcotics, cigarettes, and cell phones into the MDC. In one instance, Joseph entered a unit he was not guarding during a lockdown, opened an inmate's cell and provided him with contraband. Several hours later, MDC staff smelled marijuana in that inmate's cell and recovered a contraband cell phone during a search of the cell; Joseph was to be paid \$12,000 from this inmate for bringing in contraband. Joseph also accepted bribes to smuggle contraband into the MDC to another inmate, who then sold the contraband widely throughout his unit. Joseph also warned the inmate about upcoming contraband searches at the MDC. For example, on January 26, 2021, Joseph texted an inmate from whom he was taking bribes: "Tighten up search comin clean phones out call logs n text n try to stash it." The next day, Joseph texted the inmate: "keep your phones cleannnnnnnnnnn erase texts and call logs every night."

The government's case is being handled by the Office's Public Integrity Section. Assistant United States Attorneys Philip Pilmar and Sara K. Winik are in charge of the prosecution.