



Department of Justice

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FEDERAL PRISON EMPLOYEE SENTENCED FOR ACCEPTING PAYMENTS FROM INMATE UNDER HIS CARE

Defendant received over \$90,000 in benefits and a \$50,000 property loan

BOSTON – A Correctional Counselor for the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) assigned to Federal Medical Center Devens (FMC Devens) in Massachusetts was sentenced today for accepting payments from an inmate under his care, in violation of his duties as a public official. The defendant was also sentenced for lying to a bank about a loan he received from the inmate’s business associate and forging the associate’s signature to support this false claim.

William S. Tidwell, 50, of Keene, N.H., was sentenced by U.S. Senior District Court Judge William G. Young to two years in prison, to be followed by three years of supervised release. Tidwell was also ordered to forfeit \$95,058 and pay a \$10,000 fine. In [September 2023](#), Tidwell pleaded guilty to receiving payments as a public official in violation of his official duties, making false statements to a bank, and committing identity theft to support the false statements.

“William Tidwell ignored federal ethics and conflicts of interest laws, and his greed led him to abuse his position of authority,” said Acting U.S. Attorney Joshua S. Levy. “His corruption goes against BOP’s core mission of assisting offenders to become law-abiding citizens. Tidwell’s repeated violations showed his complete disregard for his profession, the dedicated professionals at BOP, and those he was entrusted to protect and guide.”

“William Tidwell is a longtime public servant, who fully embraced and handsomely benefitted from this illicit agreement with an inmate under his care,” said Jodi Cohen, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division. “Mr. Tidwell abused his authority and abandoned his duty, and in the end, this corruption cost him, landing him a stay in federal prison.”

“Tidwell developed a personal relationship with an inmate, accepted payments from the inmate, and lied to a bank about a loan he received from the inmate’s business associate. Tidwell’s conduct was a far cry from the integrity that we expect from federal Correctional

Officers. Today's sentencing sends a clear message that this kind of conduct will not be tolerated," said Ryan T. Geach, Special Agent in Charge of the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General Northeast Region.

Tidwell had been employed by the BOP since 2000 and had been working at FMC Devens since 2008. He was removed from federal service in October 2023 after pleading guilty in this case.

Given BOP's mission to provide for the care and custody of federal inmates, the BOP has numerous rules and regulations that govern the duties and conduct of its employees. Among other things, employees may not receive any payments, gifts, or personal favors from inmates, give preferential treatment to any inmate in the performance of their duties, or engage in outside employment that conflicts with their duties.

In approximately 2014, Tidwell began working as a Correctional Counselor at FMC Devens, a position that give him significant levels of contact with, and authority over, inmates. Among other things, Tidwell was responsible for monitoring inmate work assignments, assigning inmate housing assignments, arranging inmate legal calls, and coordinating prison visits for inmates.

One of the inmates for whom Tidwell served as a Correctional Counselor at FMC Devens was Individual 1 – an ultra-high net worth individual who had been convicted on federal charges in another jurisdiction. Starting in approximately 2018, Individual 1 caused a stream of benefits to be paid to Tidwell.

In November 2018, while Tidwell was supervising Individual 1, the inmate directed a close friend and business associate (Individual 2) to wire \$25,000 to Tidwell's close family member. Thereafter, starting in 2019, Tidwell and Individual 1 entered into an agreement pursuant to which Tidwell received thousands of dollars as part of a property management agreement. Individual 2, the inmate's associate, made the payments to Tidwell. In total, between 2019 and 2020, Tidwell received over \$65,000 in benefits as part of this property management agreement with Individuals 1 and 2. Tidwell's receipt of payments and his employment relationship with an inmate or a close associate of an inmate violated multiple official duties as a BOP employee.

Separately, in 2020, Tidwell sought to purchase a home. In connection with seeking financing for the home purchase, Tidwell received a \$50,000 loan from Individual 2. Tidwell made multiple false statements to the bank in connection with his loan application, falsely telling the bank that the \$50,000 was a gift from his employer. When the bank asked for written proof of this purported gift, Tidwell forged documents to support his earlier claim, including by unlawfully using Individual 2's name and address, and forging Individual 2's signature.

Acting U.S. Attorney Levy; FBI SAC Cohen; and OIG SAC Geach made the announcement today. Valuable assistance in the investigation was provided by the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kunal Pasricha and Mark Grady of the Criminal Division prosecuted the case.

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