

Former Corrections Officer Convicted of Making False Statements to a Federal Agent

Wednesday, July 10, 2024

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Western District of Louisiana

LAKE CHARLES, La. – United States Attorney Brandon B. Brown announced that **Samantha Harp**, 37, of Rapides Parish, a former Corrections Officer at the Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) in Oakdale, Louisiana, has been convicted by a federal jury in Lake Charles. The jury reached the guilty verdict against Harp after a two-day trial convicting her of one count of making false statements to a federal agent. United States District Judge James D. Cain, Jr. presided over the trial.

Testimony at trial revealed that while employed as a Corrections Officer at the FCI in Oakdale, evidence was uncovered that Harp had supplied certain inmates with contraband in the prison in March of 2020. A review of Harp's cell phone records showed that calls and text messages were exchanged with an inmate's family member from outside the prison. In addition, incoming messages from Cash App, a mobile application for sending and receiving money, were found on Harp's phone. Cash App records showed that the inmate's family member paid Harp for the introduction of contraband approximately two days before the introduction.

When agents with the Department of Justice, Office of Inspector General, approached Harp about the incidents, Harp denied bringing any contraband into the prison or ever calling and texting, or receiving a call or text message, from an inmate's family member or friend using her cell phone. She continued to deny having a Cash App application account or ever receiving funds through that account and in fact denied knowing what it was. When in truth and in fact, Harp did exchange text messages and phone calls with an inmate's family member, and received, via Cash App, funds from an inmate's family member for the introduction of contraband.

Harp faces a sentence of up to 5 years in prison, 3 years of supervised release, and a fine of up to \$250,000. Sentencing has been set for November 21, 2024.

The case was investigated by the Department of Justice, Office of Inspector General, and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys John W. Nickel and Danny Siefker.

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