



Department of Justice

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Federal Prison Correctional Officer Guilty of Bribery

BEAUMONT, Texas – A 34-year-old federal prison guard has pleaded guilty to bribery in the Eastern District of Texas, announced Acting U.S. Attorney Brit Featherston today.

Anquett Vernetta Lewis, of Houston, pleaded guilty to an Information charging her with bribery of a public official today before U.S. Magistrate Judge Zack Hawthorn.

According to information presented in court, from Feb. 22, 2015 to Nov. 9h, 2016, Lewis worked as a corrections officer for the Bureau of Prisons at the Federal Correctional Institution – Beaumont (FCI – Beaumont). During that time, she carried out the duties typical of a corrections officer – overseeing inmates, delivering food and other items to the inmates, and ensuring compliance with Bureau of Prisons and FCI – Beaumont rules, policies, and regulations.

Starting in October 2015 until January 2016, Lewis was paid by inmates to smuggle watches with cellular capabilities into FCI – Beaumont. Inmates in the Federal Bureau of Prisons are prohibited from possessing phones, watches, or other devices with cellular capabilities. Lewis admitted to smuggling in numerous watches and was paid by the inmates, or surrogates on their behalf, via wire transfer.

Under federal statutes, Lewis faces up to 5 years in federal prison at sentencing. The maximum statutory sentence prescribed by Congress is provided here for information purposes, as the sentencing will be determined by the court based on the advisory sentencing guidelines and other statutory factors. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the U.S. Probation Office.

This case was investigated by the Department of Justice – Office of the Inspector General and prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher T. Tortorice.

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