



**United States Department of Justice
United States Attorney's Office
District of Minnesota**

**B. Todd Jones,
United States Attorney**

**Jeanne F. Cooney
Director of Community Relations
(612) 664-5611
email: jeanne.cooney@usdoj.gov**

News Release

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Correctional officer pleads guilty to accepting bribes from inmates' relative

A former correctional officer at the Federal Medical Center in Rochester pleaded guilty today in federal court in Minneapolis to accepting approximately \$5,000 in bribes from the relatives of two inmates. Appearing before United States District Court Judge Patrick J. Schiltz, Cheryl Wheeler, age 53, of Wabasha, pleaded guilty to one count of bribery of a public official. Wheeler was charged on August 5, 2010.

In her plea agreement, Wheeler admitted that from July of 2009 through February of 2010 she demanded and received monetary bribes from the relatives of two inmates in exchange for supplying those inmates with tobacco.

For her crimes, Wheeler faces a potential maximum penalty of 15 years in prison. Judge Schiltz will determine her sentence at a future hearing, yet to be scheduled.

This case is the result of an investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeffrey Paulsen.

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