



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

DAVID M. KETCHMARK

Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs (816) 426-4220 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 Kansas City, MO 64106

www.justice.gov/usao/mow/index.html

JULY 13, 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEDERAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICER CHARGED IN MURDER-FOR-HIRE SCHEME

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. - David M. Ketchmark, Acting United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced a correctional officer at the U.S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in Springfield, Mo., was charged in federal court today with hiring someone to kill his wife's ex-husband.

Robert W. Jones, 41, of Springfield, was charged in a criminal complaint filed in the U.S. District Court in Springfield with using a telephone with the intent that a murder be committed for payment. Jones, who was arrested this morning when he allegedly met with the hit man (actually an undercover FBI agent), remains in federal custody.

According to an affidavit filed in support of today's criminal complaint, Jones contacted an inmate at the federal medical center and asked him to assist in hiring a hit man to murder his wife's ex-husband (referred to as "John Doe" in public court documents). Jones was aware that the inmate had been in a leadership position in a drug-trafficking organization, the affidavit says, and had connections to individuals who could carry out such a request.

The inmate, who was cooperating with investigators, met with Jones for 10 to 15 private conversations in March and April 2012, the affidavit says. Jones allegedly offered to give the inmate a cell phone to call a hit man, avoiding the possibility of the conversation being recorded if the call were placed on a landline at the prison.

As a part of a routine quarterly personnel shift at the medical center, Jones was moved to a different unit and was therefore unable to meet with the inmate for a period of time. The inmate later reestablished contact with Jones after being moved to a cell in the same unit that Jones was assigned. According to the affidavit, they met again on June 21, 2012, the first day they were in the unit at the same time. They had multiple meetings during July 2012, the affidavit says, with Jones standing outside the inmate's jail cell and speaking to him through an opening in the door.

All the meetings were captured on the unit's surveillance system. During one of those meetings, Jones allegedly told the inmate that his wife had left him and took all their belongings except the couch, television and bills, and he blamed John Doe for his wife's departure.

An undercover FBI agent posed as a hit man named Chuey, the affidavit says, and the inmate gave Jones a telephone number to contact Chuey. Jones allegedly contacted Chuey and made arrangements to meet in the food court located inside the Battlefield Mall in Springfield this morning. At that meeting, the affidavit says, Jones told the undercover agent he would pay him \$1,500 to murder John Doe and provided the undercover agent with a photograph of John Doe, his home address, and \$1,500 in cash. At the conclusion of the meeting, Jones was arrested.

Ketchmark cautioned that the charge contained in this complaint is simply an accusation, and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charge must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney James J. Kelleher. It was investigated by the U.S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners Special Investigative Support, the FBI and the Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

<http://www.justice.gov/usao/mow/index.html>

Twitter:

http://www.Twitter.com/USAO_WDMO

Facebook:

<http://www.Facebook.com/USAOMOW>