



Department of Justice

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CRT
(202) 514-2007
TTY (866) 544-5309

U.S. BUREAU OF PRISONS CORRECTIONS OFFICER SENTENCED IN CONNECTION WITH ASSAULT OF PRISON INMATE AND FALSIFYING REPORTS

WASHINGTON – The Justice Department announced today that U.S. Bureau of Prisons Corrections Officer William Houghton, 32, was sentenced to one year and a day in prison in connection with the beating of a federal inmate and the subsequent submission of false reports.

Houghton previously pleaded guilty to violating the civil rights of an inmate inside the Coleman Correctional Facility in Coleman, Florida, on March 22, 2014, by striking the inmate repeatedly in the head and face. Houghton admitted that the inmate did not make any physically aggressive movements, show signs of imminent violence towards the defendant or clench his fists prior to the assault. While the inmate was on the ground, Houghton continuously told the inmate to stop resisting even though he was not resisting in any way, the defendant admitted. Houghton also pleaded guilty to submitting two false reports in connection with the incident, falsely stating that the inmate had attempted to assault him and omitting the fact that Houghton had repeatedly punched the inmate.

“When correction officers violate the civil rights of those they pledge to protect, they threaten the trust that all of us place in law enforcement to keep us safe and secure,” said Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Vanita Gupta, head of the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division. “The Department of Justice will continue its vigorous efforts to ensure that when people abuse their law enforcement authority to break the law, we hold them accountable for their actions.”

This case was investigated by the FBI and the Justice Department’s Office of Inspector General, and prosecuted by Trial Attorneys Jared Fishman and Maura White of the Civil Rights Division’s Criminal Section.

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