

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Central District of California

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Ex-Federal Correctional Officer Sentenced to 15 Months in Prison for Taking Over \$15,000 in Bribes and Smuggling Contraband for Inmates

LOS ANGELES – A former Bureau of Prisons (BOP) correctional officer at the Federal Correctional Complex, Victorville was sentenced today to 15 months in federal prison for accepting more than \$15,000 in cash bribes in exchange for smuggling contraband – including methamphetamine and cell phones – into the complex's high-security penitentiary.

Paul James Hayes II, 52, of Victorville, who retired from his job with the BOP in March 2019, was sentenced by United States District Judge Michael W. Fitzgerald. Hayes pleaded guilty in January 2020 to one count of conspiracy and one count of acceptance of a bribe by a public official.

Hayes was a lieutenant with BOP's Special Investigation Services (SIS), a unit that investigates illegal activity by correctional officers and inmates. From early 2018 to September 2018, Hayes met in person with co-defendant Angel Marie Wagner, 44, of Buena Park, in parking lots of stores or restaurants in Victorville, and accepted cash bribes from her. In exchange for the bribes, Hayes accepted wrapped contraband -- including methamphetamine, suboxone and cell phones -- to be smuggled into the prison. Hayes then smuggled the contraband into the prison and provided it to inmate coconspirators, who then distributed the contraband to other inmates.

In total, Hayes accepted more than \$15,000 in cash to smuggle contraband into the prison, and he smuggled at least four separate packages of contraband into the penitentiary.

Wagner pleaded guilty in July 2020 to one count of conspiracy and one count of bribery of a public official, and she was sentenced on February 4 to two years' probation.

The U.S. Department of Justice Office of Inspector General and the FBI investigated this matter.

Assistant United States Attorney Sean D. Peterson of the Riverside Branch Office prosecuted this case.