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Three Kentucky Correctional Officers Face Additional Civil Rights Charges for Assaulting Inmates and Attempting to Cover it Up

A federal grand jury in London, Kentucky, filed a superseding indictment against three federal correctional officers — two officers and a lieutenant — for their respective roles in assaults against three federal inmates and subsequent cover-ups.

Officers Samuel Patrick, 41, Clinton Pauley, 40, and Lieutenant Kevin Pearce, 37, had previously been indicted in connection with the assaults of two federal inmates, C.T. and N.D, and subsequent cover-ups. The superseding indictment brings new charges for their assault of a third federal inmate, E.G., and attempts to cover it up.

The superseding indictment alleges that, on March 30, 2021, Patrick and Pauley, who were officers at the U.S. Penitentiary-Big Sandy, and Lieutenant Pearce, who was a supervisory officer, physically assaulted an inmate, identified in the indictment as E.G., violating that inmate's constitutional rights. The indictment also alleges that the assault resulted in bodily injury and that the defendants attempted to cover up the assault by writing false reports. The indictment also charges Patrick and Pearce with witness tampering based on their efforts to pressure a fellow correctional officer to write an untruthful report. Lastly, the indictment charges Pauley with making false statements to agents of the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General and the FBI.

The maximum penalties for the charged crimes are 10 years of imprisonment for the assault offenses and 20 years of imprisonment for each of the witness tampering and false report offenses.

Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division; U.S. Attorney Carlton S. Shier for the Eastern District of Kentucky; Special Agent in Charge William J. Hannah of the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General's Chicago Field Office; and Special Agent in Charge Jodi Cohen of the FBI Louisville Field Division made the announcement.

The Office of the Inspector General and the FBI conducted the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Zachary Dembo for the Eastern District of Kentucky is prosecuting the case in partnership with Trial Attorney Thomas Johnson of the Civil Rights Division.

An indictment is merely an allegation. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.