

**PRESS RELEASE**

# **Former Federal Correctional Officer Pleads Guilty to Obstructing Justice in Assault Investigation**

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

**For Immediate Release**

U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of California

Sandra Munagay, 44, of Atwater, a former Senior Correctional Officer at the U.S. Penitentiary in Atwater, pleaded guilty today to obstructing justice during the investigation of her alleged assault of an inmate, U.S. Attorney Eric Grant announced.

According to court documents, in 2023, while working as a correctional officer, Munagay had a verbal dispute with an inmate housed at the prison. The inmate turned and tried to walk away from Munagay, but she pursued him. When the inmate stopped and turned back towards Munagay, she punched him in the face.

The same day, Munagay falsified a report about the incident. In the report, Munagay stated that the inmate had walked towards her in an aggressive manner and that she had panicked due to his size and aggressive behavior. Munagay further stated that she tried to place her hand on the inmate's shoulder to gain distance from him and that her hand inadvertently landed on his cheek.

The video surveillance of the incident showed that the statements Munagay made in the report were false and that she was the aggressor. As part of Munagay's plea agreement, she admitted to making the statements with the intent to impede, obstruct, and influence an official investigation of the incident by the Department of Justice.

The Department of Justice Office of Inspector General conducted the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph Barton is prosecuting the case.

Munagay is scheduled to be sentenced on June 15, 2026, by U.S. District Judge Dale A. Drozd. Munagay faces a maximum statutory penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of any applicable statutory factors and the federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables.