

PRESS RELEASE

Federal Correctional Officer Indicted for Sexually Abusing Inmate at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of New York

Federal Correctional Officer Indicted for Sexually Abusing Inmate at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn

Earlier today, at the federal courthouse in Brooklyn, an indictment was unsealed charging James Johnson, a current employee of the United States Bureau of Prisons (BOP), with sexual abuse, sexual abuse of a ward, and making false statements to federal law enforcement officers, all arising from the defendant's sexual abuse of an inmate he was responsible for guarding while working as a correctional officer at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, New York (MDC). Johnson was arrested earlier today and is scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon before United States Chief Magistrate Judge Vera M. Scanlon.

Joseph Nocella, Jr., United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; James C. Barnacle, Jr., Assistant Director in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Office (FBI); and Ryan T. Geach, Special Agent in Charge, Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General (DOJ OIG) announced the arrest and charges.

"As alleged, Johnson leveraged his position as a correctional officer to take advantage of a man he was supposed to be protecting in his capacity as a prison guard and used his access to gratify his own sexual desires," stated United States Attorney Nocella. "Our Office is steadfast in its commitment to root out corruption and abuse within federal prisons, especially when that abuse is perpetrated at the hands of guards and jeopardizes the safety and security of the institution and the inmates."

Mr. Nocella thanked the New York State Police for its assistance with the investigation.

"The alleged sexual abuse of an inmate by a federal correctional officer is a grave betrayal of public trust and will not be tolerated," stated FBI Assistant Director in Charge Barnacle. "Federal correctional officers are sworn to protect, not prey upon, those in their care. No one is above the law and we will continue to work tirelessly to hold accountable those who violate the rights of federal inmates."

"The Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General will continue to aggressively investigate allegations of sexual abuse by federal Correctional Officers and, with our partners, bring these perpetrators to justice," stated DOJ OIG Special Agent in Charge Geach.

As alleged in court documents, in May 2025, Johnson was employed by the BOP as a correctional officer and mentor coordinator at the MDC. On at least two occasions during that month, Johnson ordered an inmate at the MDC (John Doe) to accompany him from John Doe's assigned unit to other locations at the MDC where the defendant sexually abused him. The evidence of this sexual abuse included DNA evidence secured through a court ordered search warrant.

Further, Johnson took steps to conceal his actions and lied to federal agents during an interview about his conduct. Specifically, when asked if he had ever engaged in any sexual acts with inmates, Johnson answered unequivocally that he had not.

The charges in the indictment are allegations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty. If convicted of the charges, Johnson faces up to life in prison.

The government's case is being handled by the Office's Human Trafficking and Civil Rights and Public Integrity Sections. Assistant United States Attorneys Megan E. Farrell and Turner Buford are in charge of the prosecution with assistance from Paralegal Specialist Johnson Peow.

The Defendant:

JAMES JOHNSON
Age: 36
New York, New York

E.D.N.Y. Docket No. 26-CR-060 (RER)

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