

PRESS RELEASE

Federal Bureau of Prisons Correctional Officer Indicted for Bribery, Drug Scheme

Wednesday, August 12, 2026

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of South Carolina

FLORENCE, S.C. — A federal grand jury in Florence returned a three-count indictment, presented by the U.S. Attorney's Office, charging Joseph Templeton, 30, of Elgin, for bribery, money laundering, and possession of marijuana with the intent to distribute.

The indictment alleges that while employed as a correctional officer at the Bennettsville Federal Correctional Institution, Templeton accepted more than \$60,000 in bribes from a BOP inmate and others associated with the inmate. The indictment further alleges that in exchange for those bribes, Templeton smuggled contraband into FCI Bennettsville, including cell phones, cell phone accessories, cigarettes, and THC. Templeton falsely processed the contraband as a contraband seizure before distributing the contraband within FCI Bennettsville.

Templeton faces a maximum penalty of 20 years' imprisonment. He was arraigned in federal court today before United States Magistrate Judge Kaymani D. West.

The case was investigated by the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General, the FBI Columbia Field Office, and the Marlboro County Sheriff's Office. Assistant U.S. Attorney Lauren Hummel is prosecuting the case.

All charges in the indictment are merely accusations and defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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