PRESS RELEASE

Halfway House Employee Sentenced for Sexual Assault of Federal Inmate

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For Immediate Release
U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Georgia

ATLANTA – Tristan Cox, a former residential halfway house employee, was sentenced to prison for engaging in non-consensual sexual contact with a federal inmate in his custody and lying to a federal agent.

"Cox violated the trust placed in him by sexually abusing an inmate and lying to investigators," said U.S. Attorney Theodore S. Hertzberg. "Today's sentence underscores that individuals entrusted with the care and supervision of inmates are expected to uphold the law and respect the rights of incarcerated persons. Our office, with the help of DOJ OIG and other law enforcement partners, is committed to punishing officials who exploit their authority and obstruct justice."

"Cox exploited his position to sexually assault an inmate and lied about it to a federal agent," stated Special Agent in Charge Eric Fehlman of the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General's Southeast Region. "The DOJ OIG will continue working with its law enforcement partners to ensure that anyone participating in this type of behavior is brought to justice."

According to U.S. Attorney Hertzberg, the charges, and other information presented in court: The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) contracts with non-governmental organizations to operate Residential Reentry Centers (RRCs), also known as halfway houses, for inmates nearing the end of federal prison sentences.

In April 2024, Cox was a BOP contract employee working at the Atlanta RRC as a Residence Monitor. While serving in this role, during an overnight shift, Cox sexually assaulted an inmate in a supply room. The Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 prohibits sexual acts between corrections staff and detainees, and any deprivation of an inmate's bodily integrity without due process of law constitutes a civil rights violation.

When interviewed by federal agents about the encounter, Cox initially denied any sexual contact. After being informed of DNA results that corroborated the victim's account, Cox falsely told agents that the victim assaulted him.

Today, Tristan Cox, 35, of Atlanta, Georgia, was sentenced to one year and six months in federal prison to be followed by one year of supervised release after pleading guilty to violating the inmate's civil rights and making false statements to a federal agent.

This case was investigated by the Department of Justice Office of Inspector General.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bret R. Hobson and Brent Alan Gray prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact the U.S. Attorney's Public Affairs Office at USAGAN.PressEmails@usdoj.gov or (404) 581-6185. The Internet address for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is http://www.justice.gov/usao-ndga.