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Federal Correctional Officer Pleads Guilty to Accepting Bribes to Bring Contraband into Prison

BIRMINGHAM -- A former cook supervisor and correctional officer at Talladega Federal Correctional Institution pleaded guilty Tuesday in federal court to accepting more than $4,000 in bribes to smuggle tobacco and synthetic marijuana into the prison, announced U.S. Attorney Joyce White Vance and U.S. Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General Special Agent in Charge Robert A. Bourbon.

DONALD D. JOHNSON, 25, of Birmingham, entered his plea before U.S. District Judge Abdul K. Kallon to one count of accepting a bribe as a public official. He is scheduled for sentencing Jan. 5, 2016.

Federal prosecutors charged Johnson, who entered a plea agreement with the government in September. According to those documents, Johnson was an employee of the U.S. Bureau of Prisons and a public official when he accepted money from inmates to introduce tobacco and K2/Spice, or synthetic marijuana, into the prison.

According to the plea agreement, Johnson attempted to conceal the payments he received from inmates by using prepaid debit cards in other people's names and had money orders mailed to an address not associated with him. After the money orders were mailed, Johnson had other friends cash them for him.

In a June 15, 2015, interview with the DOJ OIG, Johnson admitted that he received two prepaid debit cards worth $3,350 as bribery payments from inmates. Johnson also told the OIG that he received multiple money orders as bribery payments.

The maximum penalty for bribery of a public official is 15 years in prison and a $250,000 fine.

This case was investigated by DOJ-OIG. It will be prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Pat Meadows.

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