

FBI AGENT PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL CORRUPTION CHARGES, ADMITTING HE ATTEMPTED TO IMPROPERLY INFLUENCE CRIMINAL CASE

PHOENIX – A special agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation pleaded guilty this afternoon to a trio of wire fraud charges related to his improper sexual relationship with the wife of a man he investigated in two separate matters.

Joe L. Gordwin, 40, of Phoenix, pleaded guilty to three counts of “honest services” wire fraud this afternoon in United States District Court. As a result of guilty pleas, Gordwin, who is on administrative leave from the FBI, faces a maximum statutory sentence of 60 years in federal prison.

According to a plea agreement filed this afternoon, Gordwin engaged in an “improper intimate relationship” with the wife of a man he was investigating, in violation of federal law and FBI regulations. Gordwin admitted that he concealed the improper relationship from the FBI to preserve his position at the FBI, and that he also concealed the relationship from the Scottsdale Police Department and the Maricopa County Attorney’s Office, which were investigating and prosecuting the woman’s husband. Gordwin sought a favorable plea agreement for his mistress’ husband in connection with a 2005 robbery that Gordwin helped investigate for the purpose of convincing the husband not to disclose Gordwin’s improper relationship with the woman.

“Mr. Gordwin flagrantly and repeatedly violated the oath he took to follow all of the rules, regulations and laws that govern the conduct of a federal agent,” said Thomas P. O’Brien, the United States Attorney for the Central District of California, whose office is handling the Gordwin case. “This FBI agent compromised at least two criminal investigations and, as a result, will likely serve time in prison alongside the criminals he once swore to bring to justice.”

According to the plea agreement, Gordwin arrested a man identified in the indictment as B.M. as part of a gang investigation. After the arrest, Gordwin met B.M.’s wife and allegedly began having an affair with her, which began the scheme to defraud the FBI and the citizens of the United States. In early 2003, Gordwin contacted Maricopa County prosecutors and successfully argued that B.M. receive a reduced sentence.

In late 2004 and in early 2005, Gordwin provided Scottsdale Police with information about B.M., but Gordwin failed to disclose his relationship with B.M.'s wife.

In 2005, Gordwin joined an investigation into an armed robbery of a Radio Shack that resulted in the arrest of B.M. and his mistress' son (B.M.'s stepson). During meetings and in written reports discussing the investigation, Gordwin failed to disclose to his FBI superiors his relationship with his mistress and the effects the relationship was having on his actions.

In the summer of 2005, Gordwin attempted to help his mistress' son by using a confidential informant (CI) to help find a fugitive, whose arrest the son could take credit for. At this time, Gordwin disclosed information about the CI to his mistress and introduced her to the CI.

In October 2005, after being rebuffed by prosecutors who did not want to give a favorable plea deal to B.M., Gordwin allegedly became worried that B.M. would disclose Gordwin's ongoing relationship with B.M.'s former wife. At this point, Gordwin made partial admissions about the relationship to his supervisor. When speaking to his supervisor, Gordwin minimized the extent of the relationship. Even after being ordered to stop seeing the woman, Gordwin met with her and asked her to lie to investigators.

Gordwin is scheduled to be sentenced by United States District Judge Susan R. Bolton on _____ .

The case against Gordwin was investigated by the Department of Justice's Office of the Inspector General. The case is being prosecuted by the United States Attorney's Office in Los Angeles, which was assigned the matter after the United States Attorney's Office in Phoenix was recused.

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