



Department of Justice

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FORMER COLUMBUS COUNTY DETENTION CENTER INMATE CHARGED WITH CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE

WASHINGTON – The Justice Department today announced the unsealing of a federal indictment charging former inmate Terry Lashavious McMillian, 26, of Whiteville, N.C., with federal civil rights violations involving the assault of an inmate and related acts of obstruction of justice.

The three-count indictment, returned by a grand jury in Wilmington, N.C, on Aug. 24, 2011, charges McMillian for his role in a conspiracy and assault of an inmate during an Aug. 2, 2010, incident at the Columbus County Detention Center in Whiteville. Specifically, the indictment charges McMillian with conspiracy to deprive rights, deprivation of rights under color of law and witness tampering.

Thomas G. Walker, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina issued a statement saying, “Enforcement of the Nation’s civil rights laws is one of the core responsibilities of the Department of Justice. Nowhere is that role more important than when we work to ensure the safety of prisoners and the proper enforcement of our criminal laws. We cannot and will not allow individuals to take the law into their own hands and exact punishment apart from our formal criminal justice system.”

If convicted, the conspiracy and civil rights counts in the indictment each carry a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison. The witness tampering count carries a maximum sentence of 20 years. Each count also carries a maximum fine of \$250,000.

This case is being jointly investigated by the Wilmington office of the FBI Charlotte Division and the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation. The case is being jointly prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Toby W. Lathan from the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of North Carolina, and Trial Attorney Ryan R. McKinstry from the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

An indictment is only an accusation of crimes, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.