

Corrections Officer convicted in Boston for striking a mentally impaired and handcuffed inmate

“A federal jury in Boston has convicted a senior correctional officer at FMC Devens of injuring an inmate following a five-day trial.

Seth M. Bourget, 42, of Woodstock, Conn., a Senior Correctional Officer at U.S. Bureau Prisons Federal Medical Center in Devens (FMC Devens), was convicted of one count of deprivation of civil rights under color of law. U.S. District Court Judge Denise J. Casper scheduled sentencing for April 5, 2023. Bourget was arrested and charged in February 2020.

“When Mr. Bourget took an oath to become a law enforcement officer, he swore to serve and protect. He violated that oath when he violently struck a mentally impaired and handcuffed inmate,” said United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins. “When members of law enforcement demonstrate such poor judgment and gross misconduct, they undermine the exceptional work the vast majority of their colleagues do every day. Wearing a badge is an honor and comes with enormous responsibility. Mr. Bourget’s conduct fell so far below that standard he is now a convicted felon. We thank the jury for their verdict. The victim in this case sustained significant physical injuries and required 12 staples to close a gash Mr. Bourget caused to the back of his skull. Today’s conviction is for him.”

“We entrust Correctional Officers with great authority and responsibility. Bourget abused his power and assaulted an inmate using excessive force. Today, the jury held him accountable for his misconduct,” said Ryan T. Geach, Special

Agent in Charge of the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General New York Field Office.

“Today’s verdict shows that corrections officers like Seth Bourget who break the law, violate their oath, deprive an inmate of their civil rights, and then try to cover it up will be held accountable for their disgraceful conduct,” said Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division. “Most corrections officers are good and honest public servants doing an enormously challenging and important job, but the FBI will not hesitate to pursue those who violate the civil rights of their prisoners because no one is above the law.”

According to evidence presented at trial, on or about June 18, 2019, Bourget struck a handcuffed inmate suffering from severe mental illness with a large protective shield with excessive force, causing serious head injuries.

The charge of willful deprivation of civil rights under color of law provides for a sentence of up to 10 years in prison, two years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

U.S. Attorney Rollins, DOJ-OIG SAC Geach and FBI Boston SAC Bonavolonta made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Neil J. Gallagher, Jr. of Rollins’ Public Corruption Unit and Torey B. Cummings of Rollins’ Civil Rights & Human Trafficking Unit are prosecuting the case.” -Massachusetts Department of Justice.