

FCSO investigation leads to arrest and prosecution of former Fairfax County deputy for conspiring with inmate to traffic drugs

FAIRFAX, Va. – Robert Theodore Sanford, Jr., a former Fairfax County Sheriff’s Deputy, entered a guilty plea on June 5, 2024, to charges of providing drugs and other contraband to an inmate at the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center (ADC) in exchange for bribes.

On May 4, 2023, Fairfax County Sheriff’s deputies conducted a search of Sanford’s co-conspirator, an inmate being held at the Fairfax ADC. That search led to the discovery of a cellphone, phone chargers, counterfeit oxycodone pills containing fentanyl, Suboxone, and cocaine. Shortly after these discoveries, Sanford resigned from his employment with the Sheriff’s Office.

An investigation led by the Fairfax County Sheriff’s Office revealed that Sanford was receiving financial bribes from the co-conspirator inmate via CashApp. In exchange for those bribes, Sanford procured drugs from the inmate’s associates in the community. Sanford then provided the drugs to his co-conspirator inside the ADC. Search warrants for cellular phone data confirmed that Sanford used his personal cellular phone to communicate with the inmate to coordinate the purchase and transportation of this contraband as well as his payments.

Sanford also provided the inmate with crucial information such as advance warning of cell searches by deputies, whether strip searches would be conducted, and where drug-sniffing dogs were being utilized. Sanford also provided information concerning which inmates might be providing information to law enforcement agencies. Sanford also distributed drugs to women who worked as prostitutes in an apartment leased by Sanford.

Criminal conduct within the Sheriff’s Office or the Adult Detention Center is not tolerated and will be investigated and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Sanford faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison on his charges. A judge of the District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia will sentence Sanford on September 18, 2024.

Jessica D. Aber, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; David J. Scott, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Washington Field Office's Criminal and Cyber Division; and Stacey A. Kincaid, Fairfax County Sheriff, made the announcement after U.S. District Judge Rossie D. Alston Jr. accepted the plea.

2nd Lt. Jason Spindle and Investigator Aaron Waple with the Fairfax County Sheriff’s Office conducted the investigation in collaboration with agents from the FBI’s Washington Field Office. Assistant U.S. Attorney Heather Call is prosecuting the case.