



# Department of Justice

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Middle District of Florida

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
AUGUST 28, 2009  
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**COLUMBIA COUNTY MAN SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS  
IN FEDERAL PRISON FOR HIRING A HITMAN TO KILL HIS WIFE**

Jacksonville, Florida - U.S. Attorney A. Brian Albritton announces that United States District Judge Timothy J. Corrigan today sentenced Ivan Joseph ("Joe") Eccles (age 35, of Lake City, Florida) to 10 years in federal prison, the statutory maximum, for using a cellular telephone to hire a hit man to murder his wife. Eccles had pleaded guilty on April 22, 2009.

According to court documents, between February 11, 2009 and March 6, 2009, Eccles spoke on the phone with a friend whom Eccles asked to hire another individual to travel to Florida to murder his wife. After the phone call, Eccles's friend went to the Federal Bureau of Investigation(FBI) and informed agents about Eccles's request.

During a period of more than three weeks, Eccles spoke on the phone with an undercover FBI agent about how the murder should occur and the amount of money that Eccles was willing to pay for the hit. Eccles final offer was made on March 6, 2009. Eccles then sent a text message stating that he would pay the hit man \$60,000 after the murder and that the murder had to occur by a particular deadline, or Eccles would do it himself. On March 8, 2009, FBI agents arrested Eccles based upon a federal arrest warrant.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation Field Offices in

Jacksonville, Florida and Detroit, Michigan. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys A. Tysen Duva and Jay Taylor.