

NEWS

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Ex-Postal Manager in Newton and Other N.J. Locations Gets 33 Months for Misuse of Government Property and Employees

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NEWARK – A former Post Office operations manager for the U.S. Postal Service was sentenced today to 33 months in federal prison for conspiring to defraud the United States through bribery and fraud, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Stanley R. Chesler also ordered John Balliro, 52, to pay \$25,761 in restitution to the U.S. Postal Service and required that Balliro serve three years of supervised release upon completion of his custodial sentence. Balliro, of Hamburg Borough in Sussex County, will surrender to the federal Bureau of Prisons on a date to be determined by the BOP.

Balliro pleaded guilty before Chesler on July 9, 2007, to conspiracy to defraud the United States. Balliro admitted that he steered heating, ventilating and air conditioning (“HVAC”) and plumbing work for Postal Service facilities to an HVAC business located in Pennsylvania. In return, Balliro admitted he accepted corrupt cash payments, ranging from \$100 to \$400 per instance, from the proprietor of the HVAC business.

Balliro also admitted that he steered automotive maintenance and cleaning work for Postal Service vehicles to a repair and car wash business, and that in return he accepted free automobile repairs for himself and relatives, a free automobile for his son, and between \$2,000 and \$2,500 in cash that was used for his daughter’s wedding.

Balliro further admitted that he allowed another Postal Service employee to perform extensive carpentry work at his personal residences while the employee was on Postal Service time.

Balliro had worked in various capacities for the U.S. Postal Service, including as an Officer in Charge and a Postmaster for the Newton Post Office from April 1996 to August 1999. He also acted as the Post Office Operations Manager from August 1999 to June 2003 for the Central and Northern New Jersey Customer Service Districts for the Postal Service, supervising the operations of more than 75 post offices in Morris, Sussex, and Warren Counties.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Chesler consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, was not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Christie credited Special Agents from the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General, with developing the case against Balliro.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Joyce M. Malliet.

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Defense Counsel: Thomas Bello, Esq. Staten Island, NY