

# NEWS

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United States Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey  
970 Broad Street, Seventh Floor  
Newark, New Jersey 07102

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***Paul J. Fishman, U.S. Attorney***

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Assistant U.S. Attorney:  
Brian R. Howe  
973-645-2853

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## Convicted Former New Brunswick Official Sentenced To Nine Years For Murder-For-Hire Plot Targeting His Wife

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(More)

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CAMDEN - A former New Brunswick official was sentenced to nine years in federal prison for attempting to hire a hit man to murder his wife, U.S. Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

U.S. District Judge Joseph E. Irenas also ordered Richard Kaplan, 60, of New Brunswick, to serve three years of supervised release.

On August 19, 2008, Kaplan, who was a former New Brunswick city construction inspector and zoning officer already serving a 30 month sentence at the Federal Correctional Institution in Fairton for taking more than \$30,000 in bribes, pleaded guilty before Judge Irenas to using the mail to facilitate the murder for hire plot.

At his August 19, 2008 plea hearing, Kaplan admitted that he wanted his wife murdered because of money issues and the belief that she was “conspiring” with her family against Kaplan since he entered prison in October 2007, following his September 6, 2007 sentencing on the bribery charge. Kaplan further admitted that not long after arriving at the prison, and over the course of several months in 2008, he began planning to find someone who could kill his wife and make it look like an accident. Kaplan admitted that he told a fellow inmate, who was cooperating with the investigation unbeknown to Kaplan, that he was willing to pay \$25,000, including a good-faith down payment of \$2,000, for the murder. A federal law enforcement undercover agent posing as a hitman subsequently was introduced through the cooperating witness to Kaplan. After the meeting, Kaplan then took further steps to facilitate the murder scheme.

Kaplan further admitted, at the plea hearing, that he told the undercover agent that he wanted his wife to be killed in a staged car accident. Kaplan also confessed to the Court that, on March 30, 2008 at the federal jail, he met with the undercover agent posing as the hit man, and reiterated his desire to have his wife murdered.

Fishman credited Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Michael B. Ward, and Special Agents of United States Department of Housing and Urban Development - Office of the Inspector General, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Joseph Clarke, with the investigation into Kaplan’s illegal activity. Fishman also thanked the Federal Bureau of Prisons, specifically officials at Fairton, for their assistance. Fishman also credited the New Brunswick Police Department for their assistance. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Brian R. Howe, Deputy Chief of the U.S. Attorney’s Special Prosecution’s Division in Newark.

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Defense counsel:

Timothy Dey, Esq. – East Brunswick, NJ