

NEWS

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Paterson Lead Paint Inspector Sentenced to
One Year in Federal Prison for Taking Bribes

(More)

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NEWARK – A lead paint inspector for the City of Paterson was sentenced to 12 months in federal prison today for accepting bribes in exchange for exercising official action, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Jose L. Linares continued Yolanda Lane's release on a \$25,000 bond pending her surrender to the U.S. Bureau of Prisons on Nov. 26.

Lane, 38, was a lead paint inspector for the City of Paterson Environmental Health Department when she took \$300 in cash from a local property manager who was in fact cooperating with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Inspector General.

Lane was initially arrested and charged in March when federal agents arrested 14 current and former Paterson and Passaic public employees, most of them associated with the City of Paterson Section 8 Program, on corruption charges.

On June 27, Lane pleaded guilty before Judge Linares to a one-count Information charging her with attempting to extort money under color of official right. At her plea hearing, Lane admitted that she met with the property manager on multiple occasions and negotiated a fee of \$150 per apartment in exchange for performing prompt lead paint inspections. After this arrangement was made, Lane accepted \$300 in cash for the inspection of two apartments. Lane subsequently agreed to visit properties that she was informed would contain lead with the possibility of arranging it so that the manager could lease the properties first and fix the lead paint issues later.

In determining the sentence, Judge Linares 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 of the FBI's Garret Mountain Resident Agency, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weysan Dun, and Special Agents from HUD OIG, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Rene Febles, with the investigation.

The government is represented by Assistant United States Attorney Hope S. Olds of the Office's Special Prosecutions Division.

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Defense Counsel: Dawn L. Jackson, Esq., Newark