



718.286.6000
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE (718) 286-6315
QDACommunications@queensda.org

**FORMER CORRECTION OFFICER CHARGED WITH FILING PHONY DOCUMENTATION FOR
MEDICAL TREATMENT**

Defendant Allegedly Made 50 False Claims of Medical Treatment Including from Deceased Physician

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz and New York City Department of Investigation Commissioner Nadia Shihata announced that James Wilson was arraigned on charges of grand larceny and offering a false instrument for filing for submitting documentation falsely claiming that he had been treated by healthcare professionals in order to justify being out on sick leave from his position as a correction officer at Rikers Island. The documentation allegedly included a note from a doctor who had died four months before the purported treatment.

District Attorney Katz said: “As alleged, this defendant filed dozens of fake doctor’s notes to remain on paid sick leave from his job with the Department of Correction. James Wilson went as far as submitting a note from a doctor who died the year before the defendant allegedly received treatment. I thank our partners at the New York City Department of Investigation and the Department of Correction for their assistance on this case.”

Department of Investigation Commissioner Nadia Shihata said: “As charged, this former Correction Officer stole thousands of dollars in sick leave he was not entitled to receive by submitting 50 falsified medical notes — including documents purportedly issued by a deceased physician. This conduct violates Department of Correction policy and the law—compounding a staffing crisis faced by DOC in 2022. I thank the Queens District Attorney’s Office for its partnership on this investigation and DOC for referring this matter to DOI.”

Department of Correction Commissioner Stanley Richards said: “Correction officers work long hours at a difficult job to ensure that their colleagues and the people in the Department’s care are safe. Any kind of fraud or dishonesty represents a serious betrayal and anyone who engages in such conduct will be held accountable. I commend our Special Investigations Unit for their hard work and collaboration in this case.”

Wilson, 46, of Staten Island, was arraigned today on charges of grand larceny in the third degree, grand larceny in the fourth degree and 50 counts of offering a false instrument for filing in the second degree. Queens Criminal Court Judge Thomas Wright-Fernandez ordered Wilson to return to court July 13. If convicted, Wilson faces a potential maximum of 2 1/3 to seven years in prison.

District Attorney Katz said that, according to the charges and investigation, Wilson was employed as a correction officer assigned to Rikers Island from December 19, 2016, to May 3, 2024, and was out on sick leave for periods of time from January 2, 2022, to November 19, 2022.

Under city regulations, uniformed correction officers who report sick for nine days or more during a calendar year may not leave their homes except under certain circumstances, such as a visit to a physician or hospital. Those who do leave their residences are required to submit documentation about the trip to the Department of Correction's Health Management Division (HMD).

Wilson allegedly submitted documentation to HMD on the letterhead of Med Care Consultants in Brooklyn saying he was treated 10 times from January 5, 2022, to November 19, 2022. The letters were signed by one doctor and bore the stamp of another.

He also submitted 18 letters in which he claimed to be treated at Professional Care Physical Therapy on Staten Island from April 20, 2022, to September 27, 2022. The documents were on the practice's letterhead and signed by a physical therapist.

Wilson turned in 10 letters on the letterhead of Victory Internal Medicine/Mount Sinai Doctors on Staten Island that indicated he had been treated 10 times from April 24, 2022, to November 19, 2022. The letters were signed by a doctor.

The defendant claimed to be treated 10 times at the office of a Queens physician 10 times from January 2, 2022, to September 11, 2022. The letters were signed by the doctor and were on his letterhead.

An investigation revealed that Wilson was not treated at any of the medical practices on the dates in question and that no one at those practices authorized the letters submitted by Wilson.

Wilson also submitted letters allegedly signed by Dr. Walter Pizzi claiming he had been treated on April 27 and April 30, 2022. Pizzi died on December 24, 2021.

On the 43 dates in question, Wilson received \$13,727.45 in total pay.

The investigation was conducted by Correction Officer Investigators Anthony Palmer and Matty Lupinacci with DOI's Office of the Inspector General for DOC.

Assistant District Attorney Yong Kim of the District Attorney's Public Corruption Bureau is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Bradley T. King, Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Joseph T. Conley III.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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