



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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**FORMER CITY CORRECTION OFFICER SENTENCED TO TWO YEARS' PROBATION AND \$80,297 IN RESTITUTION
FOR FRAUDULENTLY COLLECTING TENS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS
OF MILITARY LEAVE PAY FROM THE CITY SHE WAS NOT ENTITLED TO RECEIVE**

Nadia I. Shihata, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), issued the following statement on the sentencing of a former City Department of Correction ("DOC") officer, who was also a Sailor in the United States Navy Reserve and New York Naval Militia, for fraudulently obtaining approximately \$80,297 in military leave pay from the DOC between December 2022 and March 2024. DOI began its investigation after a referral from the DOC and investigated this matter with the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, which prosecuted the case.

LEAH MATHIEU, 35, of Freeport, N.Y., pled guilty in April 2026 to one count of Wire Fraud. Today, U.S. District Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, sentenced MATHIEU to two years' probation and 100 hours of community service. The defendant was also ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$80,297.90.

DOI Commissioner Nadia I. Shihata said, "Paid military leave is a benefit intended to support City employees who are actively serving in the armed forces. Falsifying records to obtain this paid leave is a crime and particularly troubling when it involves a City correction officer entrusted with upholding the law. Today's sentence, which includes restitution, holds this defendant accountable and calls attention to illegal conduct that erodes a benefit meant for those honestly representing their service to this country. I thank the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York for its continued partnership and commitment to protecting City funds. Additionally, I thank the Department of Correction for referring this matter to DOI."

According to court documents, MATHIEU was a correction officer employed by the DOC and a member of the United States Navy Reserve and New York Naval Militia. In the fall of 2022, MATHIEU reported for state active duty according to a set of orders issued by the New York Naval Militia that listed the defendant's dates of active duty as October 20, 2022 to April 17, 2023. On December 7, 2022, MATHIEU was released from state active duty because she operated a government vehicle without proper authorization. However, MATHIEU did not inform the DOC she had been released from state active duty. Instead, MATHIEU falsely told the DOC she would not be present at work because she was still on state active duty pursuant to a new set of orders that she had forged. The defendant forged at least five documents and, based on her false representations, illegally obtained military leave pay from the DOC between December 2022 and March 2024, totaling approximately \$80,297.90.

MATHIEU was employed by DOC beginning in December 2016. As a result of this investigation, MATHIEU was suspended on April 9, 2026, and subsequently terminated on April 22, 2026. At the time of termination, MATHIEU was receiving an annual base salary of approximately \$109,352.

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Commissioner Shihata thanked Jamie McDonald, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, for his Office's partnership on this case, which was prosecuted by the Office's Public Corruption Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorney Rebecca T. Dell was in charge of the prosecution. Commissioner Shihata also thanked the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, the New York State Department of Military and Naval Affairs, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection – New York Field Office, and the Special Agents and Task Force Officers of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York. Additionally, Commissioner Shihata thanked DOC Commissioner Stanley Richards, and his agency's Military Liaison Unit, for their cooperation in this investigation.

At DOI, the case was investigated by DOC Captains Lawrence Bond and Antonio Fonseca of DOI's Office of the Inspector General for the DOC, under the supervision of Inspector General Marissa Carro, Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Michael P. Mullahy and Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Initiatives Christopher Ryan.

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country and New York City's corruption watchdog. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City. DOI's strategy attacks corruption comprehensively through systemic investigations that lead to high-impact arrests, preventive internal controls and operational reforms that improve the way the City runs.

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