



The City of New York  
Department of Investigation

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### **INVESTIGATION LEADS TO ARREST OF DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION CAPTAIN ON FORCIBLE TOUCHING AND SEXUAL ABUSE CHARGES**

Mark G. Peters, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced today the arrest of TIMOTHY COWEN, a Captain with the City Department of Correction ("DOC") and personnel supervisor at the George R. Vierno Center ("GRVC") on Rikers Island, charged with forcibly touching and sexually abusing a female Correction Officer as she worked in the administrative offices at GRVC. This is the second arrest DOI has made of a DOC employee for sexual misconduct in as many months and is part of DOI's broader investigations of sexual assault on Rikers Island. In August 2016, a Correction Officer was indicted on Rape in the First Degree and other charges. The office of Bronx County District Attorney Darcel D. Clark is prosecuting today's arrest and the August indictment.

DOI Commissioner Mark G. Peters said, "As charged, this DOC Captain abused his power and authority as a New York City law enforcement officer when he sexually accosted a junior officer. We will not tolerate lawlessness on Rikers Island. As the City's independent Inspector General, DOI takes these allegations of sexual misconduct seriously and its Inspector General for DOC is focused on this important and concerning issue."

COWEN, 33, of Islandia, N.Y., was charged with Forcible Touching, a class A misdemeanor; Sexual Abuse in the Third Degree, a class B misdemeanor; and Harassment in the Second Degree, a violation. Upon conviction, a class A misdemeanor is punishable by up to a year's incarceration, a class B misdemeanor is punishable by up to three months' incarceration, and a violation is punishable by up to 15 days' incarceration.

COWEN has been employed by DOC since March 2007 and receives an annual base salary of approximately \$81,879. COWEN was reassigned to another facility by DOC after the incident was reported in January 2016.

According to the criminal complaint and DOI's Investigation, DOC reported to DOI that on January 18, 2016, COWEN approached and grabbed a female Correction Officer assigned to the administrative offices as she looked for a log book. The Correction Officer pushed his hand away and told the defendant to stop. The Correction Officer again began looking for the log book and the defendant approached and touched her. The Correction Officer pushed the defendant away and the defendant then pulled the Correction Officer towards him. The Correction Officer immediately reported the incident.

In a separate investigation last month, DOI arrested Correction Officer JOSE COSME on charges he allegedly raped and engaged in other sex acts with a female inmate at the Rose M. Singer Center on Rikers Island in November 2015. COSME was indicted on Rape in the First Degree, a class B felony, and other

charges. COSME's case is pending and he is due back in court in December. The press release on this investigation can be found at this link: <http://on.nyc.gov/2daR7nT>

Commissioner Peters thanked Bronx County District Attorney Darcel D. Clark, and her staff, and DOC Commissioner Joseph Ponte, and his staff, for their cooperation and assistance in this investigation.

The investigation was conducted by DOC's Equal Employment Opportunity investigators, the Office of the Bronx County District Attorney and DOI's Office of the Inspector General for the Department of Correction.

The case is being prosecuted by the Bronx County District Attorney's Office, specifically Assistant District Attorney Jessica Morak, under the supervision of Joseph Muroff, Chief of the Child Abuse/Sex Crimes Bureau.

A criminal complaint is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

*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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