



ATLANTIC COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

4997 Unami Boulevard, Mays Landing, NJ 08330

James P. McClain
Prosecutor



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release
May 6, 2015
2 Page (s)

For further information contact:
Mark J. Cooker (609)-909-7881
PIO@acpo.org

MAYS LANDING – A former 12-year veteran of the Atlantic City Police Department has been convicted for official misconduct, theft, and tax fraud Atlantic County Prosecutor Jim McClain announced today.

In March of 2012, Atlantic City Police Officer Michael L. Jones, now 41 of Atlantic City, was arrested for official misconduct and theft by deception. He was processed and released on his own recognizance.

Prior to the arrest, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Public Corruption Task Force, the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office Official Corruption Unit and the State of New Jersey Department of Treasury, Division of Taxation Office of Criminal Investigation initiated a joint investigation after learning that Officer Jones' lease in Stanley Holmes Village was terminated by the Atlantic City Housing Authority for failure to comply with the terms of the Live-In Police Officer Program.

The program allows police officers to lease public housing for substantially discounted rent, in exchange for active community policing in an effort to reduce crime in public housing. The Live-In Police Officer Program required Jones to reside on the premises, provide police related services outside of his employment with the police department, provide quarterly reports and provide a police officer presence to the residents of Stanley Holmes.

The joint-investigation revealed that Officer Jones paid a discounted rent of \$202 per month for an apartment to participate in the Live-In Police Officer Program, which would have otherwise been rented for \$1,035 per month. Jones was enrolled in the program from April of 2005 until May of 2011—a total of 74 months.

The joint investigation also revealed that Jones did not reside at the apartment and did not fulfill the requirements of the program. Instead, Officer Jones subleased the apartment to various individuals in violation of the lease agreement, while he lived in a separate residence. Jones allegedly collected between \$39,200.00 and \$51,000.00 in rent money.

The discounted rent Jones paid as a participant in the Live-In Police Officer Program allegedly defrauded the Atlantic City Housing Authority and taxpayers of over \$61,000 in potential rental income.

The joint investigation also revealed that Jones made \$95,787.74 in cash deposits to his personal checking account between 2005 & 2011. The New Jersey Division of Taxation determined those cash deposits were income that Jones failed to report on his tax returns from 2005 to 2011. That unrelated income resulted in a failure to pay \$6,393.70 in state income tax.

On February 14, 2013, an Atlantic County Grand Jury indicted Jones, on four criminal counts including; Official Misconduct, Theft by Deception, Filing Fraudulent Tax Returns and Failure to Pay State Tax in connection with subletting his Stanley Holmes apartment, which he received at a discounted rate as a participant in the Live-In Police Officer Program.

Today, after a 7-day trial before Atlantic County Superior Court Judge Kyran Connor, an Atlantic County jury found Jones guilty of all counts: Official Misconduct, a 2nd. degree crime, Theft by Deception, a 3rd. degree crime, Filing Fraudulent Tax Returns, a 3rd. degree crime and Failure to Pay State Tax, a 3rd. degree crime.

First Assistant Prosecutor Diane Ruberton represented the State in the case and in addition to the criminal convictions; the State filed a petition for the forfeiture of Jones' public employment as a police officer.

Jones is scheduled to be sentenced on June 17, 2015 and he was released today on the HEDS program. (HEDS is Home Detention Monitoring Program)

Official Misconduct, a crime of the second degree, carries a prison term of 5 to ten years in New Jersey State Prison, with a mandatory period of parole ineligibility. Theft by Deception, a crime of the third degree, carries a prison term of 3 to 5 years.

Anyone with information involving serious crimes is asked to call the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office at 609-909-7800 or go to the Prosecutor's Office Web site at <http://www.acpo.org/tips.html> and provide information by filling out the form anonymously on the Submit a Tip page. People can also call Crime Stoppers at 609-652-1234 or 1-800-658-8477 (TIPS) or visit the Crime Stoppers Website at <http://www.crimestoppersatlantic.com/>. Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards for information leading to the arrest and indictment of those who commit crimes in Atlantic County.