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Two State Corrections Officers Indicted in Inmate's Assault

TRENTON – A Mercer County grand jury returned an indictment today charging two state corrections officers in connection with the assault of an inmate at New Jersey State Prison, Mercer County Prosecutor Joseph L. Bocchini Jr. announced.

The seven-count indictment charges Sergeant Kevin Newsom, 46, of Ewing, with one count of aggravated assault (second degree), one count of aggravated assault with a weapon (third degree), one count of official misconduct (second degree), one count of possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose (third degree) and one count of tampering with witnesses (third degree).

Lieutenant Stephen Alaimo, 42, of Cliffwood, is charged with one count of official misconduct (second degree) and one count of tampering with physical evidence (fourth degree).

Each second-degree offense carries a penalty of five to 10 years in prison. Each third-degree offense carries a penalty of three to five years in prison.

According to Bocchini, a routine use-of-force investigation by the New Jersey Department of Corrections Special Investigations Division led investigators to contact the prosecutor's office in August 2010 when it was suspected that the potential for criminal charges existed. A joint investigation by the Mercer County Prosecutor's Internal Affairs Unit and the NJDOC SID ensued, and resulted in Newsom and Alaimo being charged in criminal complaints in the fall of 2010.

The investigation revealed that on July 13, 2010, Sergeant Newsom struck inmate Bradley Peterson in the head several times with a metal baton while the inmate was handcuffed, shackled

and offering no resistance. Subsequently, Newsom directed his subordinate officers to write their reports in such a way that his own misconduct would not be exposed.

The investigation also revealed that Lieutenant Alaimo failed to report Newsom's conduct after the inmate's injuries were inflicted and ordered the clean-up of the crime scene.

Assistant Prosecutors Doris M. Galuchie and Angelo Onofri presented the case to the grand jury.

Despite having been indicted, every defendant is presumed innocent until found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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