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Jury Convicts Former Federal Prison Warden for Sexual Abuse of Three Female Inmates

A federal jury convicted former prison warden Ray J. Garcia of seven counts involving sexually abusive conduct against three female victims who were serving prison sentences and one count of making false statements to government agents.

Garcia, 55, of Merced, California, was initially charged with sexual abuse of an inmate on Sept. 24, 2021. A federal grand jury issued a superseding indictment on Aug. 23, 2022, charging Garcia with three counts of sexual abuse and four counts of abusive sexual contact against three female inmates. The criminal acts were alleged to have occurred from December 2019 to July 2021. The superseding indictment also charged Garcia with one count of making false statements to a government agency during the investigation of the criminal acts.

Today, a jury convicted Garcia of all counts.

"Today's guilty verdict is one important step in our ongoing efforts to root out sexual misconduct within the Bureau of Prisons," said Deputy Attorney General Lisa O. Monaco. "It also delivers justice to the victims in this case, who were repeatedly subjected to the defendant's egregious sexual abuse and gross exploitation of power. As this verdict illustrates, the Department of Justice is committed to prosecuting cases of criminal misconduct by Bureau employees and to holding accountable all who violate their duty to protect those in their custody."

"The evidence presented at trial demonstrated that FCI Dublin's former warden, whose responsibility was not only to assure the care and welfare of individuals incarcerated at his institution but also to demonstrate to employees that unethical and illegal conduct from prison officials would not be tolerated, used his authority instead to prey sexually upon female inmates under his control," said U.S. Attorney Stephanie M. Hinds. "The jury heard the evidence of these despicable acts, and its guilty verdicts hold the former warden accountable for his crimes. I thank the DOJ OIG and the FBI for their hard work on this case and the jury for its service and attentiveness to the evidence we presented."

"Garcia exploited his authority, sexually abused three inmates, repeatedly lied to try to cover up his crimes, and fostered a culture of abuse at FCI Dublin. The Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General will continue to bring to justice any BOP employee who abuses inmates," said Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz.

"Today, a jury convicted Ray J. Garcia of abusing his position at FCI Dublin to sexually abuse three female victims who were incarcerated and placed in his care. He betrayed his responsibility and the public's trust," said Special Agent in Charge Robert K. Tripp of the FBI San Francisco Field Office. "The FBI is committed to protecting the civil rights of all victims, and hold accountable individuals in positions of trust who violate those rights under the color of law."

Trial evidence showed that Garcia was employed as an associate warden and later as the warden of the Federal Correctional Institute in Dublin, Calif. (FCI Dublin), an all-female low security federal correctional institution. All three of the victims were incarcerated and serving their prison sentences at FCI Dublin under the custodial, supervisory and disciplinary authority of Garcia when the crimes occurred.

The jury convicted Garcia of three counts sexual abuse and one count of sexually abusive contact against an inmate referred to as Victim 1. Trial evidence showed that Garcia's sexual abuse and abusive sexual contact against Victim 1 began in December 2019 and extended through March 2020. During this time period, Garcia would encounter Victim 1 in and around the prison visitation room, including in an attached bathroom and an inmate changing stall. In these areas, Garcia would engage in sexual contact with Victim 1.

Garcia was also convicted of two counts of abusive sexual contact with Victim 2, both acts occurring in the time period of January to July 2021. Trial evidence showed that the acts occurred in a warehouse within the prison grounds and also in Victim 2's prison cell. These areas, generally out of the immediate view of others, were where Garcia would engage in abusive sexual contact with Victim 2.

The jury also convicted Garcia of abusive sexual contact with Victim 3 during the period of March to September 2020. Garcia engaged in this sexual contact of Victim 3 in the prison's electrical shop.

The jury lastly convicted Garcia of making false statements to a government agency on July 22, 2021. On that date, Garcia was interviewed by government law enforcement agents during the investigation of his sexual conduct with inmates. Evidence at trial showed that Garcia falsely claimed he had never asked inmates to be undressed for him at a specific time and that had he never touched an inmate inappropriately. Trial evidence showed that Garcia had already asked multiple inmates to undress for him and had also touched Victim 1, Victim 2 and Victim 3 in a sexual manner.

Garcia was convicted of three counts of sexual abuse of a ward, and each count carries a maximum term of imprisonment of 15 years. The jury convicted Garcia of four counts of abusive sexual conduct, and each count carries a maximum term of two years imprisonment. The jury also convicted Garcia of making false statements to a government agency, which carries a maximum sentence of eight years' imprisonment. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

U.S. District Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers, who presided over the trial, set a sentencing date for March 8, 2023. Garcia remains out of custody pending his sentencing hearing.

Deputy Attorney General Monaco, U.S. Attorney Stephanie, Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz and Special Agent in Charge Tripp made the announcement.

DOJ-OIG and the FBI are investigating the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Molly Priedeman and Andrew Paulson for the Northern District of California, with the assistance of Madeline Wachs, Leeya Kekona and Sara Slattery are prosecuting the case.

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