



**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY PROSECUTOR
JENNIFER WEBB-MCRAE
CUMBERLAND COUNTY PROSECUTOR**

Harold B. Shapiro
First Assistant Prosecutor

Darrin Pulman
Chief of Investigators

115 Vine Street
Bridgeton, New Jersey 08302
Telephone (856)453-0486
Fax (856)451-1507

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Prosecutor Jennifer Webb-McRae announces:

On October 31, 2025, Cortlen S. Flax, age 37 of Woodbury, was sentenced before the Honorable Joseph M. Chiarello, J.S.C., to a five year state prison sentence as the result of his conviction for second degree Official Misconduct. A conviction for simple assault was merged for purposes of sentencing. Pursuant to the sentencing statute, Mr. Flax must serve all five years before being eligible for release from prison. The sentence was the result of a guilty verdict following a jury trial which concluded in July. A motion by the defense for a new trial was previously argued in September but denied by the court.

At trial, the State presented evidence that the defendant, who was employed as a Senior Corrections Officer at South Woods State Prison, entered a prison cell assigned to Julio Valdez of Jersey City, who was 61 years old at the time. During an interaction with Mr. Valdez, the defendant struck him on the left side of the head without provocation, resulting in a ruptured ear drum. The investigation was conducted by members of the New Jersey Department of Corrections Special Investigations Division.

The State was represented by Assistant County Prosecutor Charles J. Wettstein. The defendant was represented by attorneys Stuart J. Alterman and Donna O'Brien of Marlton, New Jersey.

****If this press release involves the charging, accusation or indictment of a criminal defendant, same is merely an accusation. The defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.***