



U.S. Department of Justice

**Matthew M. Graves**  
*United States Attorney for the  
District of Columbia*  
Patrick Henry Building  
601 D Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20530

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Former District of Columbia Fire/EMS Employee Sentenced to Prison For Bribery in Scheme Involving Undelivered Goods Defendant Accepted Bribes to Benefit a Contractor**

WASHINGTON—Louis “Joey” Mitchell III, a former employee of the District of Columbia Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS), was sentenced today to 34 months in prison for accepting more than \$60,000 in payments from a District of Columbia contractor in exchange for directing purchase agreements and orders to the contractor and then falsely certifying that goods that FEMS had paid for had been delivered.

The announcement was made by U.S. Attorney Matthew M. Graves, Wayne A. Jacobs, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Washington Field Office’s Criminal Division, and Daniel W. Lucas, Inspector General for the District of Columbia.

Mitchell, 50, of Capitol Heights, Maryland, pleaded guilty to bribery in May 2022, in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. He was sentenced by the Honorable Amit P. Mehta. Following his prison term, Mitchell will be placed on three years of supervised release. He also must pay a \$61,250 forfeiture money judgment and \$257,680 in restitution.

Mitchell was a warehouse supply technician at FEMS. In that role, he was responsible for verifying deliveries of goods to the warehouse before the agency would issue payments to the relevant vendors. According to the plea documents, beginning in at least 2016 and continuing through in or about 2020, Mitchell and a FEMS contract administrator engaged in a bribery scheme with a contractor whose company was an approved vendor for supplies.

According to the documents, Mitchell and the contract administrator solicited and received bribes from the contractor on at least seven occasions in exchange for directing purchase orders to the contractor’s company and confirming delivery of and payment for goods that the company did not deliver. In addition, Mitchell, the contractor, and the contract

administrator made fraudulent charges on FEMS credit cards, payable to the contractor's company, and then split the proceeds.

As a result of the bribery scheme, FEMS paid the company approximately \$250,000 for goods that never were delivered. Mitchell personally received at least \$61,250 in bribes from the contractor.

The FEMS contract administrator, Charity Keys, pleaded guilty in July 2022 to bribery and is to be sentenced on Dec. 2, 2022. In her guilty plea, Keys, 44, of Bowie, Maryland, admitted to a federal bribery charge receiving at least \$42,500 in bribes.

Law enforcement opened an investigation into the conduct after FEMS officials discovered procurement anomalies and referred the matter to the District of Columbia Office of the Inspector General and the FBI for investigation. Mitchell and Keys were arrested on Feb. 10, 2022.

This case is being investigated by FBI's Washington Field Office and D.C. Office of Inspector General. The case is being prosecuted by the Fraud, Public Corruption, and Civil Rights Section of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia.

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