



# NEWS RELEASE

Office of the United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Texas

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **FORMER PRISON GUARD SENTENCED TO 14 YEARS**

(Beaumont, Texas)                      A former corrections officer has been sentenced to 168 months in federal prison for dealing drugs. U.S. District Judge Thad Heartfield sentenced **MEL GENE MICKLES**, 24, to prison this morning.

According to information prosecutors presented in court, Mickles was employed as a corrections officer for Corrections Services Corporation (CSC), a private corporation that leases and operates the old county jail facility in downtown Beaumont. On July 2003, the Jefferson County Narcotics Task Force, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department Internal Affairs and officials with the CSC conducted a joint undercover operation because of allegations that drugs and cell phones were being smuggled into the jail. Mickles was arrested on July 24, 2003 when he was caught carrying 47.02 grams of crack cocaine that he intended to deliver to an inmate in exchange for cash. After he was arrested, his vehicle was searched and investigators seized an additional 130.19 grams of crack cocaine and \$1,000 in a lock box in the trunk.

**U.S. Attorney Matthew D. Orwig says this sentence should send a message, "This office expects a high degree of professionalism and integrity from those sworn to uphold the law. This lengthy**

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**sentences should send a clear message that we will not tolerate corrections officers who fall short of that standard and violate the law."**

Mickles began work at the jail in November 2002, and was terminated after his arrest.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert Hobbs prosecuted the case.

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