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### **Correctional officer arrested for smuggling**

A CoreCivic employee working at Trousdale Turner Correctional Facility was recently arrested for her role in smuggling the deadly substance, fentanyl, into the prison, just a week before a former correctional officer pleaded guilty for nearly beating an inmate to death. According to an affidavit filed in Trousdale County, Denise Haggard, a correctional officer at TTCC, was arrested on March 31. She is charged with possession of a controlled substance with intent to manufacture, deliver or sell the controlled substance. The affidavit states that on that day, "Institutional Investigator Kelly Hunt received intelligence that Haggard was introducing a controlled substance into the penal facility." It was revealed to Hunt that Haggard may also have had "additional controlled substances inside her vehicle on prison property." A K-9 handler, Michael Vasquez, was reportedly summoned with his K-9, Dante, to conduct an investigation of Haggard's vehicle. The arrest warrant indicated that Haggard signed a permission waiver consenting to the vehicle search. During his investigation, Dante alerted his handler to the odor of narcotics coming from the vehicle. A subsequent search of the vehicle yielded the recovery of a pellet-shaped container that was "taped with black electrical tape," according to reports. Inside the pellet, investigators reportedly found 144 grams of a white powder substance. A field test of the substance yielded a positive identification of the drug fentanyl. Following a field test, the substance was determined to be fentanyl. CoreCivic's public affairs manager, Matthew Davio, maintains that the introduction of contraband into correctional facilities is a nationwide challenge. "CoreCivic has a zero-tolerance policy for the introduction of contraband into our facilities," he said in an email on Tuesday. "We work closely with both the Tennessee Department of Correction and law enforcement officials on investigative and intervention efforts to prevent, detect and remove the introduction of contraband into the facility." Civil rights violations, Kenan Lister, a former supervisory corrections officer at the TTCCF, pleaded guilty on April 8 to two counts of civil rights violations. A public information officer with the U.S. Attorney's office for the Middle District of Tennessee, David Boling, reported that Lister was pleading guilty to deprivation of rights charges. The first related to the use of unlawful force on an inmate, while the second related to a "deliberate indifference" to the inmate's medical needs. "All persons, including prison inmates, are guaranteed under the Constitution the right to be free from cruel and unusual punishment," U.S. Attorney Mark H. Wildasin said. "I commend our partners at the FBI and the prosecution team for their diligent work in bringing this case and ensuring accountability for the unlawful actions of a prison guard." The guilty plea is the culmination of a case that stemmed from an August 2019 incident. Lister was indicted in September of last year. He admitted in 2019 that he was on duty as the prison's security threat group coordinator and escorted an inmate to a holding cell after the inmate assaulted a prison employee. At the time, and while the inmate was sitting in a holding cell and not resisting, Lister punched the inmate in the head, knocking him to the ground, and then kicked, punched, and struck the inmate multiple times in his head, chest, and torso after he was on the ground. The assault reportedly caused serious bodily injury to the inmate, including fracturing his ribs and puncturing his lung, which required the inmate to undergo surgery and to be hospitalized for several days. Despite Lister's knowledge that the inmate needed medical attention, the officer failed to provide medical care or to make the necessary notifications to get the inmate medical care and, instead, locked the inmate in a holding cell. "When a correctional officer violates the civil rights of an inmate whose safety he is charged with, it undermines the respect and reputation of all law enforcement officers," said Douglas Korneski, the special agent in charge of the FBI Memphis field office. "The FBI will vigorously investigate and bring to justice any law-enforcement officer who violates the constitution and the trust of the people." Lister faces up to 10 years in prison on each count when he is sentenced in August. According to Davio, Lister was terminated shortly after being placed under investigation. "The safety of our staff and the inmates entrusted to our care is our top priority," he said. "We have a zero-tolerance policy for any form of violence against inmates."