

Newton Man Charged with Defrauding Federal Agency by Inflating Expenses and Submitting Fake Bids - GSA Office of Inspector General

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of Massachusetts

Thursday, April 22, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BOSTON – A Newton man was charged yesterday in connection with defrauding the General Services Administration.

Benedetto Valente, 60, was charged and has agreed to plead guilty to one count of wire fraud. A plea hearing has not yet been scheduled by the court.

According to the charging documents, Valente engaged in a scheme to defraud the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), as well as the company he worked for, by causing expenses to be billed that neither GSA nor the company actually incurred. Valente allegedly did so by inflating payroll expenses and charging items he used in his personal business and then creating fake documents to make it appear that those items were intended for GSA. Valente also allegedly arranged to award contracts for scaffolding and masonry repair to a family member, including by submitting fake bids so his family member could obtain the contracts, and by diverting a subcontract awarded to another contractor to his family member at an inflated price.

The charging statute provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, three years of supervised release, a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss, whichever is greater, and forfeiture. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Acting United States Attorney Nathaniel R. Mendell and Joseph Dattoria, Special Agent in Charge of the General Services Administration, Office of Inspector General, Boston Field Investigations Office made the announcement. Assistant U.S. Attorney Sara Miron Bloom of Mendell's Securities, Financial & Cyber Fraud Unit is prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice [press release](#).