

Newton Man Pleads Guilty to 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, May 13, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BOSTON – A Newton man pleaded guilty today in connection with defrauding the General Services Administration.

Benedetto Valente, 60, pleaded guilty to one count of wire fraud. U.S. District Court Judge Leo T. Sorokin scheduled sentencing for Sept. 8, 2021. Valente was charged on April 22, 2021.

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 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 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 Christopher J. Markham of Mendell's Securities, Financial & Cyber Fraud Unit is prosecuting the case.

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