

**Former GSA Official Sentenced to Four Months in Prison for Receiving Illegal Gratuity
- GSA Office of Inspector General**

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for Receiving Illegal Gratuity**

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
District of Massachusetts
July 12, 2022

BOSTON – A former employee of the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) was sentenced today in federal court in Boston for receiving illegal gratuity.

Kevin Richards, 52, of Hanover, was sentenced by U.S. Chief District Court Judge F. Dennis Saylor IV to four months in prison and one year of supervised release. Richards was also ordered to pay a fine of \$7,500 and forfeiture of \$10,250. On March 29, 2022, Richards pleaded guilty to one count of receiving an illegal gratuity as a public official and two counts of making false statements to a federal agency.

Richards was employed as the Leasing Director for the New England Region of the Public Buildings Service, a division of GSA. Starting in 2017, Richards also worked as a licensed real estate agent for a Duxbury real estate company owned by Individual A, from whom he received real estate commissions in 2017 and 2018. Richards was permitted to have a job outside GSA provided that he disclosed it, and whether or not he received any compensation, in an annual financial disclosure report required by GSA's ethics office.

In November 2019, GSA posted a job announcement "Realty Specialist (Lease Contracting Officer)" opening in Richards's office for which he would be the hiring manager. In April 2020, Richards emailed Individual A about the job posting, substantively edited Individual A's resume and gave Individual A confidential GSA interview questions, all without telling GSA. Individual A applied and was selected by Richards for the position over 65 qualifying individuals who had also applied for the job. Richards then successfully sought authorization for Individual A to receive an above-normal salary – \$102,517 instead of \$85,428 – and an above-normal accrual rate for annual leave. Richards did not disclose his financial relationship with Individual A with GSA officials.

Shortly after Individual A started at GSA and almost two years after Richards had earned a commission from the Duxbury real estate company, Richards texted Individual A, "If you need any help on your new listing let me know." A few days later Individual A advertised Richards as a listing agent for a \$1.1 million property in Duxbury. Individual A paid Richards a \$10,250 commission when the second property sold.

In his GSA financial disclosure report for 2020, Richards falsely stated that he had not held any positions outside GSA that year. On Feb. 22, 2021, a GSA ethics official emailed Richards, asking whether he still had the position with the Duxbury real estate company that he had reported having in 2019. Richards falsely replied, "I did not work for them last year. I did not do any outside business last year." In fact, Richards had done work for the Duxbury real estate company in 2020 and later filed a federal tax return in which he reported a net loss of \$14,592 working for that company in 2020.

United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins and Joseph Dattoria, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. General Services Administration, Office of Inspector General, Boston Field Investigations Office made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Christine Wichers and Dustin Chao of Rollins' Public Corruption & Special Prosecutions Unit prosecuted the case.

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Source: U.S. Attorney's Office [press release](#)