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# Ex-inmate testifies in jail official's rape case

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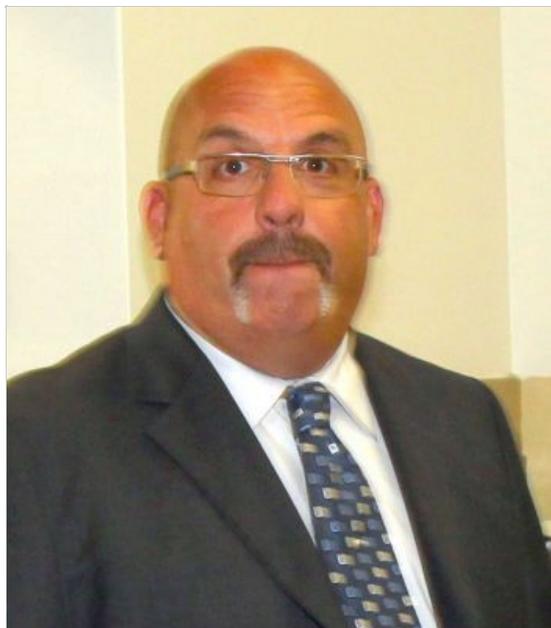


Photo credit: Howard Schnapp | Former corrections officer Mark Barber at the Nassau County Court in Mineola. (July 23, 2012)

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A former inmate at the Nassau County jail testified Thursday that she had sex with a correction officer there in the hopes of gaining money, cigarettes and other privileges.

The woman testified that she agreed to have sex with correction

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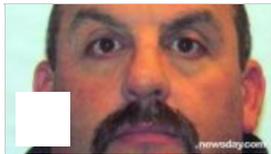
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officer Mark Barber in 2009. She said she knew him prior to her arrest because, when she was an exotic dancer, he had paid her for sex.

Barber, 50, of Levittown, is accused of using his position as an inmate grievance officer at the East Meadow jail to arrange time alone with six female inmates between 2007 and 2009, asking them for sex in exchange for items they wanted, like cigarettes and phone privileges, Assistant District Attorney Bernadette Ford has said in court.

The woman, 38, also of Levittown, testified for several hours Wednesday and Thursday at Barber's trial on rape and sexual abuse charges. Newsday is not naming the woman because she is the alleged victim in a sexual abuse case.

Although Ford said the women, including the one who testified Thursday, agreed to have sexual contact with Barber, under the law, all sexual contact between inmates and correction officers is illegal.

"He never, like, asked me and forced me," said the woman. "I did it, you know?"

She said that in 2007, while in jail, she told Barber that she had had breast enhancement surgery since she last saw him. He then asked to see her breasts, she said.

"I went halfway into the cell and lifted my shirt up," she said. "Just a quick flash."

Barber's lawyer, Edward Galison, of Mineola, has maintained his client's innocence, and Thursday questioned the witness pointedly about whether she was certain her encounters had been with Barber and not his identical twin brother, John, who is also a Nassau correction officer.

The woman said she had known both brothers when she was an exotic dancer. On the stand, she identified a photo in evidence as being of Mark Barber, when in fact it was a photo of his brother.

The woman also admitted on the stand that she had told a grand jury that Barber has a tattoo when in fact, it's his brother who has a tattoo.

Galison, who wore a necktie that said in bold letters, "I'm too sexy for my tie," said in his opening statement that the women stand to benefit from Barber's conviction since several of them have civil suits against him.

The woman who testified Thursday has filed a \$3 million federal lawsuit against Barber.

The woman said in court that she was a drug addict for several years, and performed the sex act with Barber "hoping to achieve something."

"What kind of something?" the prosecutor asked.

"Money, more cigarettes. Something," she said.

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