



Mass. state trooper pleads guilty to collecting pay for bogus OT



JOHN TLUMACKI/GLOBE STAFF/FILE

A Massachusetts State Police vehicle

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A suspended Massachusetts State Police trooper from Braintree pleaded guilty Friday in federal court to collecting pay for hours he did not work, according to federal prosecutors.

In a statement, the US Attorney's Office for Massachusetts said Kevin Sweeney, 40, pleaded guilty to one count of embezzlement from an agency receiving federal funds and one count of wire fraud. He is slated to be sentenced on Dec. 11.

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Sweeney is one of six current and former members of State Police facing federal charges in a wide-ranging overtime fraud investigation. Forty others have been accused by the department.

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[Last month](#), Sweeney agreed to plead guilty to federal embezzlement charges and to serve time in prison, according to authorities.

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On Friday, Sweeney admitted that he was paid more than \$5,900 for overtime shifts that he either did not work portions of or at all during a four-month stretch of 2016, according to prosecutors. Sweeney earned \$218,512, including more than \$97,000 in overtime pay, that year, according to prosecutors.

In one instance, Sweeney claimed in payroll submissions and other paperwork that he wrote eight motor vehicle citations during an overtime shift in Dec. 2016. He submitted copies of the citations to State Police, but his radio was not turned on during the overtime shift, nor did he run any driver histories, according to the attorney's office. Additionally, records from the state's Registry of Motor Vehicles show that none of the motorists Sweeney claimed to have cited received a citation that day, federal prosecutors said.

In another instance that month, Sweeney falsified times of citations on copies he submitted to State Police, "so that it would appear to MSP that the citations had been written during the overtime shift that Sweeney did not work," according to the statement.

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The bogus overtime in question involved two State Police programs that were intended to reduce crashes on the Massachusetts Turnpike through "an enhanced presence" of troopers who were instructed to target vehicles that were speeding, according to the attorney's office.

While the embezzlement and wire fraud charges call for prison sentences up to 10 and 20 years, respectively, according to federal prosecutors, Sweeney agreed in a plea deal to help investigators with their investigation and to serve eight to 14 months in prison, followed by a year of supervised release. Sweeney was assigned to Troop E, which was responsible for patrolling the Mass. Pike before it was disbanded this spring as a result of the overtime scandal.

Roughly one-third of that unit's members have been accused of collecting overtime pay for hours and shifts they did not work.

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