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Ex-State Police trooper sentenced to prison in overtime fraud scandal

By [Matt Rocheleau](#) and [Danny McDonald](#) Globe Staff, Updated May 10, 2019, 1:08 p.m.



A former Massachusetts State Police trooper ensnared in the high-profile overtime fraud scandal is due to be sentenced in federal court in Boston on Friday for collecting pay for hours he did not work. JOHN TLUMACKI/GLOBE STAFF /FILE 2018

A former Massachusetts State Police trooper ensnared in the high-profile overtime fraud scandal was sentenced to two months in federal prison Friday for collecting pay for hours he did not work.

Kevin B. Sweeney, 40, of Braintree [pleaded guilty](#) last year to one count of embezzlement from an agency receiving federal funds and one count of wire fraud after striking a [deal](#) with the US attorney's office.

He admitted he was paid more than \$5,900 for overtime shifts that he did not work portions of, or completely skipped, during a four-month stretch of 2016, a year in which Sweeney collected about \$219,000 in pay, including more than \$97,000 in overtime, records show.

On Friday, US District Court Judge Nathaniel M. Gorton also sentenced Sweeney to one year of supervised release, the first three months of which will be served in home detention, federal prosecutors say.

Gorton also ordered Sweeney to pay a fine of \$4,000 and restitution in the amount of \$11,103.

In a letter filed in federal court asking for leniency, William P. Sweeney III wrote that his brother has "accepted responsibility" and "fully cooperated with investigators." Kevin Sweeney's wife, Lauren, said her husband has swapped roles with her seamlessly to take care of their three young children.

"A man of lesser strength and character may have crumbled under these circumstances. But, not my husband," she wrote. "He has turned what is admittedly a bad situation into an opportunity to let his true character and worth shine through."

Last week, in a separate case, a different federal judge, Mark L. Wolf, grilled federal prosecutors about why they hadn't pursued [conspiracy charges](#) against the troopers involved in the overtime scandal.

Sweeney was assigned to the now-defunct Troop E, which patrolled the Massachusetts Turnpike.

Including him, 46 current and former Troop E members — representing approximately one-third of the division — were accused by an internal State Police audit of collecting overtime for hours and shifts they didn't work.

The ongoing audit's findings have been shared with state and federal prosecutors who are conducting parallel investigations.

The skipped overtime shifts were intended to target speeding and aggressive drivers. To cover up their absences and to meet unconstitutional ticket [quotas](#), troopers wrote "bogus" traffic citations, prosecutors have said. They [destroyed](#) or disposed of copies of the phony citations, and filed other fraudulent paperwork.

Criminal charges have been filed against 10 troopers. Sweeney is one of eight to plead guilty.

Two of the eight have been sentenced. One was sentenced to a year of supervised release, including three months of home detention. Another was ordered to serve three months in prison followed by a year of supervised release and is now in a federal prison in New Jersey. Both were ordered to pay back what they embezzled.

The troopers' pensions are [in jeopardy](#), too.

Sweeney began working for State Police in late 2000, according to the department, and he has made headlines before but for starkly different reasons.

He and another trooper involved in the overtime scandal — Gregory Raftery, who's now serving time in the New Jersey prison — were among a group of troopers and state transportation officials who earned public recognition for an

incident in July 2016 in which they helped rescue a driver from a car that overturned off the Massachusetts Turnpike and caught fire.

Sweeney was suspended without pay in March 2018 after he was flagged in the agency's probe.

In light of Sweeney's felony conviction, the department said it has fired him.

Sweeney has other sources of income, though. State property and business records show that Sweeney has for years co-managed a real estate business which owns properties around his hometown of Braintree.

Before news of the overtime scandal broke, State Police officials for years had received warnings about payroll issues. But, despite the red flags, there is [scant evidence that department leaders acted](#) to address the problems.

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