

D.C. Man Sentenced to Federal Prison for Carrying Out Conspiracy To Impersonate Federal Law Enforcement Officers

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For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Columbia

WASHINGTON – Arian Taherzadeh was sentenced today to 33 months in prison for pretending to be a federal law enforcement officer to curry favor with members of the U.S. Secret Service, and to lease several luxury apartments for which he then failed to pay rent.

The announcement was made by U.S. Attorney Matthew M. Graves; Acting Special Agent in Charge David Geist of the FBI's Washington Field Office Criminal Division; Inspector General Dr. Joseph V. Cuffari, of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; and Inspector in Charge Damon E. Wood, of the Washington Division, U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

On Aug. 1, 2022, Taherzadeh, 41, of Washington, D.C., pleaded guilty to conspiracy, a federal offense, and unlawful possession of a large-capacity ammunition feeding device and voyeurism, both District of Columbia offenses, in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. In addition to the prison sentence, U.S. District Court Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly ordered 36 months of supervised release and restitution of \$706,218.

According to court documents, Taherzadeh and a co-conspirator, Haider Ali, 36, of Springfield, Va., operated a business called United States Special Police LLC (USSP), which was described as a private law enforcement, investigative, and protective service based in Washington, D.C. The two men represented themselves to law enforcement as investigators and/or special agents and claimed that their unit was part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The company was not associated in any way with the U.S. government or the District of Columbia and had never done business with the federal or D.C. governments.

As the scheme unfolded, Taherzadeh falsely claimed at various times to be, among other things, a Special Agent with the DHS, a member of a multi-jurisdictional federal task force, a former U.S. Air Marshal, and a former U.S. Army Ranger. He used these false claims to recruit others to USSP, under the guise that it was part of a covert federal law enforcement task force, to defraud owners of three apartment complexes into providing him with multiple apartments and parking spaces for his

supposed law enforcement operations, and to ingratiate himself with members of federal law enforcement and the defense community. Both Taherzadeh and Ali used these false claims to recruit others to join their "task force" or "unit," which these individuals believed to be part of DHS and federal law enforcement.

In furtherance of the scheme, Taherzadeh and Ali ingratiated themselves with employees of the U.S. Secret Service because it provided them with cover and aided in their scheme. Beginning as early as the spring of 2020, Taherzadeh began falsely identifying himself as a Special Agent to employees of the United States Secret Service. In one instance, he falsely claimed to two Secret Service employees that he was in a gang unit. He told another that he was part of a covert task force. Taherzadeh also provided these Secret Service employees with tangible and intangible gifts. For instance, Taherzadeh provided one employee and his wife with a generator and a doomsday/survival backpack. He provided another employee with a rent-free penthouse apartment for approximately one year, worth approximately \$40,200. He provided a third employee with a rent-free apartment for approximately one year, worth an estimated \$48,240, as well as a drone, a gun locker, and a Pelican case.

Taherzadeh and others used assumed law enforcement personas and the business to maintain leases for multiple apartments and parking spaces for supposed law enforcement operation at three luxury apartment complexes in the District of Columbia. At one luxury apartment complex in Southeast D.C., Taherzadeh and Ali maintained several units including a penthouse where Taherzadeh and Ali possessed, among other things, a Glock handgun registered to Ali that was loaded with a large-capacity ammunition feeding device, surveillance equipment, law enforcement tactical gear and a machine capable of programming Personal Identification Verification (PIV) cards used to create false credentials. Within his own apartment, Taherzadeh possessed a Sig Sauer P229 handgun with five, fully loaded large-capacity ammunition feeding devices, containing 61 rounds of ammunition. They also used their false identification with law enforcement to obtain security footage in the building as well as a list of the building's residents as well as their apartment numbers and contact information.

Throughout their tenancies at the three luxury apartment complexes, no rent was paid on the leased apartments or parking garage spaces. This resulted in a loss to the buildings of \$698,363 and to the garage of \$7,854.

Finally, Taherzadeh installed surveillance cameras outside and inside his apartment in one of the complexes. Among other places, he installed, maintained, and utilized cameras in his bedroom. He used these cameras to record women engaged in sexual activity. Taherzadeh then showed these explicit videos to third parties.

Taherzadeh and Ali, were arrested on Apr. 6, 2022. Ali pleaded guilty on Oct. 5, 2022, to a conspiracy and bank fraud, both federal offenses, and unlawful possession of a large-capacity ammunition feeding device, a District of Columbia Offense. On Aug. 8, 2023, Ali was sentenced to 68 months of incarceration followed by 36 months of supervised release and ordered to pay restitution.

This case was investigated by the FBI's Washington Field Office, the Office of the Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. It was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Elizabeth Aloï and Joshua S. Rothstein of the Fraud, Public Corruption, and Civil Rights Section.

Valuable assistance was provided by Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher Tortorice and Paralegal Specialists Quiana Dunn-Gordon, and Lisa Abbe and former Paralegal Specialist Chad Byron of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, and Trial Attorneys Kathleen Campbell and Evan Turgeon of the Department of Justice's National Security Division.