

PRESS RELEASE

Ex-Husband of ‘Real Housewives of New Jersey’ Star Sentenced to Seven Years in Prison for Violent Crime in Aid of Racketeering and Obstruction of Justice

Tuesday, October 15, 2024

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of New Jersey

NEWARK, N.J. – The ex-husband of a former star of the Bravo reality television show “The Real Housewives of New Jersey,” was sentenced today to 84 months in prison for hiring, then assisting, a soldier in the Lucchese Crime Family to assault his ex-wife’s current husband, U.S. Attorney Philip R. Sellinger announced.

Thomas Manzo, 59, of Franklin Lakes, New Jersey, was convicted on June 4, 2024, after a two-and-a-half week trial before Judge Susan D. Wigenton in Newark federal court. The jury convicted Manzo of one count of committing a violent crime in aid of racketeering, one count of conspiracy to commit a violent crime in aid of racketeering, and one count of falsifying and concealing documents related to a federal investigation.

“Whether you’re actually in the Mafia or not, hiring the mob to assault someone because of your marital problems is abhorrent. Covering up the role you played only makes it worse. The jury’s verdict, and today’s sentence, make clear that this office will spare no resources to hold accountable anyone who commits such crimes.”

U.S. Attorney Philip R. Sellinger

According to documents filed in this case and the evidence at trial:

In the spring of 2015, Manzo, a co-owner of The Brownstone, a Paterson, New Jersey, catering hall, hired Lucchese Crime Family soldier John Perna to assault his ex-wife’s then-boyfriend, paying for the assault with a free wedding reception. Perna, a “made

man” with his own crew, worked with them to carry out the assault on July 18, 2015. The Perna wedding, held in August 2015 at the Brownstone, was attended by approximately 330 people, many of whom also were members of the Lucchese Crime Family. Four years later, Manzo concealed and falsified documents related to the Perna wedding in response to a grand jury subpoena.

In addition to the prison term, Judge Wigenton sentenced Manzo to three years of supervised release and ordered him immediately remanded.

U.S. Attorney Sellinger credited special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge Nelson I. Delgado in Newark, with the investigation leading to the conviction. U.S. Attorney Sellinger also thanked special agents of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of the Inspector General, Officers with the Lyndhurst Police Department, Officers with the Totowa Police Department, Investigators with the Monmouth County Prosecutors Office, Investigators of the New Jersey State Police, and the Passaic County Prosecutor’s Office for their substantial assistance.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kendall R. Randolph of the U.S. Attorney’s Office’s Organized Crime and Gangs Unit, Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas S. Kearney of the U.S. Attorney’s Office’s Special Prosecutions Division and Bruce P. Keller, Special Counsel to the U.S. Attorney.

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Topic

VIOLENT CRIME

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