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Former City Worker Arraigned on Charges of Theft, Official Misconduct, and Obstruction of Justice

A fourteen count indictment has been filed in the Circuit Court of Cook County charging a former City of Chicago employee with eight counts of theft, four counts of official misconduct, and two counts of obstruction of justice.

Abd Ayesh, 32, was arraigned yesterday before Cook County Judge Michael Claps and entered a plea of not guilty. If convicted, Ayesh faces up to 7 years in prison. He was released on \$25,000 bond.

The indictment charges the defendant with stealing evidence confiscated by city inspectors and selling it for profit while employed with the City of Chicago as a supervisor of Tax and License Compliance in the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection. In that role, Ayesh stored items seized by city investigators before they were secured in another facility. Another city employee said that he and Ayesh stole and then sold cartons of cigarettes that the city had seized because they lacked the necessary tax stamps.

The other city employee, a revenue investigator, agreed to cooperate with investigators. The investigation showed that in April of this year, Ayesh stole cigarette cartons worth more than \$2,000 and ensured the cartons were delivered to a shop that Ayesh's brother operated.

Both Ayesh and the revenue inspector have since been removed from their jobs based on their conduct.

The indictment was the product of a joint investigation between the City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, the Cook County State's Attorney, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

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