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**FORMER RIKERS ISLAND INMATE SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS IN PRISON
FOR STARTING FIRE IN CELL**
Sentence to Run Consecutive to 40-Year Term He Is Serving for Manslaughter

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark today announced that a former Rikers Island inmate has been sentenced to 25 years in prison for starting a fire in the jail complex. The sentence will run consecutive to a 40-year prison term he is serving for a Brooklyn killing.

District Attorney Clark said, "The defendant intentionally started a fire in his jail cell and prevented a correction officer from immediately putting out the flames, jeopardizing the lives of Correction Officers and other inmates. The defendant was considered one of the most dangerous and volatile inmates that Rikers Island has seen over the last several years. This consecutive sentence sends a strong message to anyone who would commit violence in jail."

District Attorney Clark said the defendant, Steven Sidbury, 26, of Brooklyn, was sentenced in absentia today by Bronx Supreme Court Justice Steven Barrett to 25 years in prison. A jury found the defendant guilty of second-degree Arson on September 26, 2018 after he was tried in absentia. Sidbury was disruptive and was barred from the courtroom.

According to the investigation, on January 8, 2014, at the George R. Vierno Center on Rikers Island, the defendant, who was in solitary confinement at the time, started a fire in the food slot of his cell. A Correction Officer observed smoke from the defendant's cell and saw Sidbury lighting pieces of paper on fire. The Correction Officer tried to push a fire extinguisher hose through the slot, but the defendant pushed it away. The officer called for assistance and the fire was extinguished. The defendant, another inmate and several Correction Officers received medical attention for smoke inhalation. The fire endangered the lives of inmates in the solitary confinement area, since each inmate who comes out of the cell has to be escorted.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorneys Jennifer Russell of the Rikers Island Prosecution Bureau and Donald Hanratty, Deputy Chief of the Rikers Island Prosecution Bureau, under the supervision of Deanna Logan, Chief of the Rikers Island Prosecution Bureau, and the overall supervision of Jean Walsh, Chief of the Investigations Division. District Attorney Clark thanked court officers and correction officers for maintaining safety.