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Navy chaplain pleads guilty at general court-martial

MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO, Va. – Lieutenant Cmdr. John Thomas Matthew Lee pled guilty today at a general court martial to violating several articles of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including Article 92, violation of a lawful general regulation; Article 125, sodomy; Article 128, aggravated assault; Article 133, conduct unbecoming a military officer; and Article 134, indecent acts with another and fraternization.

Lee, 42, was sentenced by a military judge to 12 years confinement, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, and dismissal from the Navy. However, a pretrial agreement limited Lee's sentence to two years confinement, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, and dismissal from the Navy, provided Lee, who is HIV positive, furnishes a list of sexual partners he has had since learning of his HIV status. The purpose of the list is to allow military medical officials, following established protocols, to contact the appropriate agencies so those individuals can be notified that they should get tested for HIV/AIDS. The health and safety of service members and the community at large is the military's primary concern.

The military judge for the proceeding was Col. Steven Day.

U.S. Marine Corps personnel sentenced to confinement of one year or longer automatically have their cases forwarded to the Navy-Marine Court of Criminal Appeals for review.

Lee was relieved of his duties as a chaplain here in June.