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## Staten Island 'mob cop' begged for his freedom before dying in jail

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Former New York City police detective Stephen Caracappa exits Federal Court escorted by his brother Domenic, left, and attorney Rae Koshetz, right, Thursday, July 21, 2005, in Brooklyn. Caracappa and former partner and detective Louis Eppolito were convicted of leading double lives at hitmen for the mob, gunning down, kidnapping and tracking down rivals of a Lucchese family underboss for tens of thousands of dollars in blood money. (AP Photo/ Louis Lanzano)

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STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- The convicted "mob" detective from Staten Island who died in a federal prison last week spent his last years pleading for his freedom.

In June 2016, Stephen Caracappa, a former Great Kills resident, wrote a letter to the court to consider his "compassionate release" because he was suffering from cancer, according to court records.

"Please know I have been fighting the case in the courts since [being] convicted with no relief," he wrote. "I have stage 4 cancer and will not survive."

But U.S. District Judge Jack Weinstein later denied the request, saying "There is nothing I can do in your case," said a letter filed in Brooklyn federal court.

In 2011, Caracappa petitioned the court to overturn his conviction based on what he described as newly-discovered evidence, which was denied, court records show.

Last year, he filed another appeal claiming newly-discovered jury instructions given by the court during the trial, but that was also denied, according to court documents.

Caracappa died April 8 at a medical detention facility in Butner, N.C., [the Daily News reported](#). He was 75 years old.

Caracappa, along with Louis Eppolito, [were sentenced to life in prison in 2009](#) for committing eight mob-ordered executions between 1986 and 1991.

Caracappa got an additional 80-year prison sentence and was issued \$4.25 million in fines. He was allowed to keep his NYPD pension.

A Brooklyn federal court jury in April 2006 decided the pair was responsible for eight murders, kidnapping and other crimes. Eppolito was convicted on one count each of RICO conspiracy, money laundering, narcotics conspiracy and narcotics distribution. Caracappa's convictions included one count each of RICO conspiracy, narcotics conspiracy and narcotics distribution.

While working for the NYPD, they were allegedly also on the payroll of Luchese crime family underboss Anthony (Gaspire) Casso.

The two detectives were paid \$4,000 a month to provide Casso with law-enforcement information. They received extra cash for murder contracts, including \$70,000 for a hit on Eddie Lino, a Gambino crime family capo suspected of being involved in a failed assassination attempt on Casso, the ruling said.

Eppolito, whose father was a member of the Gambino crime family, retired from the NYPD in 1990.

He played a bit part in Martin Scorsese's 1990 mob drama "GoodFellas" and launched an unsuccessful career as a screenwriter.

Caracappa retired in 1992 after establishing the Police Department's unit for mob murder investigations. In 2005, while awaiting trial to start and after posting bail, Caracappa had stayed with his mother in South Beach.

In 2015, the city agreed to pay \$5 million to the family of a Brooklyn man, mistakenly slain nearly three decades ago in a mob hit aided by the so-called "Mafia Cops."

The settlement with the mother of Nicholas Guido, an innocent victim, comes four months after a Brooklyn federal court judge green-lighted the multimillion-dollar wrongful-death lawsuits filed against the city by the families of seven men, including Guido, rubbed out by the mob with assistance from Caracappa and Eppolito.

In allowing the cases to proceed, District Judge Raymond J. Dearie said there was evidence to suggest the killings would not have occurred had Eppolito been kicked off the force or disciplined after he was "caught red-handed" passing confidential police records to a mobster in 1984.

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