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## Man sues ex-probation officer

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A man who spent nearly a year in prison because his probation officer forged his name on some paperwork has sued the now-convicted former officer, alleging she violated his civil rights.

In a federal lawsuit filed in Milwaukee, Andrew Elem Jr., 54, of Milwaukee alleges he was wrongfully imprisoned from July 1998 to June 1999 because of the actions of Emily C. Lewandowski of Thiensville.

In July 1994, Elem was placed on probation for delivery of cocaine. In July 1997, three days before the end of the probation term, Lewandowski signed Elem's name to a document that agreed to extend his probation by two years, according to the civil suit and the criminal complaint against Lewandowski. She signed Elem's name without his knowledge or consent, according to the suit.

Lewandowski did not return a reporter's call.

Elem's probation was revoked, and he was sent to prison when he committed a misdemeanor, fourth-degree sexual assault, in 1998. While he was behind bars, a judge finally appointed a lawyer for him, said his attorney, Scott B. Taylor.

"He spent a good amount of time in maximum security, which is certainly no picnic because it throws you in with the worst of the worst offenders," Taylor said.

Elem suffered "severe mental and emotional damages, as well as economic loss," the suit says. He is asking the court to award him unspecified damages.

Lewandowski, 32, pleaded no contest to a charge of misconduct in public office in 2000 in connection with Elem's case. She was sentenced to three years' probation and is no longer a probation officer.