



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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**DOI INVESTIGATION LEADS TO ARREST OF NEW YORK CITY CORRECTION OFFICER
ON CHARGES OF SMUGGLING CONTRABAND INTO THE MANHATTAN DETENTION COMPLEX**

Mark G. Peters, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced today the arrest of a Correction Officer with the New York City Department of Correction ("DOC") on charges of bringing in contraband, specifically what is believed to be marijuana, into the Manhattan Detention Complex. DOI's drug-sniffing dog, Buster, was positioned at the front gate during a routine screening on Friday morning, October 12, 2018, at about 9:40 a.m. and alerted on Correction Officer THOMAS STEWART as he entered the facility where he is assigned. The case is being prosecuted by office of New York County District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr.

DOI Commissioner Mark G. Peters said, "This is the second arrest this week involving insider corruption at the City's jails. In this case, and the one earlier this week in the Bronx, a correction officer violated his oath to protect safety within the jails, the safety of his fellow officers, by smuggling in contraband, according to the charges. We know that contraband fuels an underground trade and violence behind bars. We thank the Manhattan District Attorney's Office for its partnership on these important arrests."

STEWART, 37, of Brooklyn, N.Y., was charged with Bribe Receiving in the Third Degree, a class D felony; Promoting Prison Contraband in the Second Degree, Criminal Possession of Marijuana in the Fourth Degree and Official Misconduct, all class A misdemeanors. Upon conviction, a class D felony is punishable by up to seven years in prison, and a class A misdemeanor is punishable by up to one year's incarceration.

STEWART has been employed by DOC as a Correction Officer since June 2017, he receives an annual base salary of approximately \$44,333, and was suspended immediately after his arrest.

According to the criminal complaint and DOI's investigation, on October 12, 2018, DOI's drug-sniffing dog, Buster, alerted on STEWART as he entered the front gate at the Manhattan Detention Complex. After Buster alerted, the defendant surrendered two brick-sized packages wrapped in black plastic tape that he had concealed on himself. The investigation determined that the bricks weighed approximately 142.6 grams, or over five ounces, and contained multiple rubber balloons filled with a green leafy substance believed to be marijuana. DOI later recovered \$140 in cash from the defendant who indicated he had been paid that sum to bring in the contraband to give to a prisoner.

The investigation is ongoing.

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DOI Commissioner Peters thanked Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr. and his staff for their prosecution of this matter; and DOC Commissioner Cynthia Brann and her staff for their cooperation in this investigation.

The investigation was conducted by DOI's Office of the Inspector General for DOC, specifically, Special Investigator Matthew London; DOI's K-9 team: Special Investigator Karla Bentson and K-9 Buster, under the supervision of Assistant Inspector General Carmelo Galarza, all under the supervision of Assistant Inspectors General Michael Garcia and Mercedes Bayon and Deputy Inspectors General Reginald Barometre, Whitney Ferguson and Richard Askin, and overall supervision by Inspector General Dana A. Roth, Associate Commissioner Paul Cronin, Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Susan Lambiase, and First Deputy Commissioner Lesley Brovner.

Assistant District Attorney Stephanie Minogue, assigned to the Public Corruption Unit in the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, is prosecuting the case.

A criminal complaint is an accusation. The defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country and New York City's corruption watchdog. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City. DOI's strategy attacks corruption comprehensively through systemic investigations that lead to high-impact arrests, preventive internal controls and operational reforms that improve the way the City runs.

**DOI's press releases can also be found at twitter.com/NYC_DOI
Bribery and Corruption are a Trap. Don't Get Caught Up. Report It at 212-3-NYC-DOI.**



Contraband recovered from Friday's arrest of Correction Officer Thomas Stewart, who was arrested on charges of contraband smuggling and bribery, after DOI's drug-sniffing K-9, Buster, alerted on Stewart as he walked into the Manhattan Detention Complex.*

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