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11-2020
For Immediate Release
February 28, 2020

THREE NYC DOC OFFICERS INDICTED FOR COVERING UP ASSAULT OF DETAINEES AT HORIZON JUVENILE CENTER

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark and New York City Department of Investigation Commissioner Margaret Garnett today announced that three New York City Department of Correction Officers have been indicted on Attempted Assault, evidence tampering, lying on official reports and other related charges involving a fight with three youths in Horizon Juvenile Center.

District Attorney Clark said, “The officers allegedly fought with three 17-year-old residents, and one officer gave a resident a bloody lip. Another officer allegedly removed blood-stained sheets from the facility. The three officers did not report the incident as required; when they did so under order, they allegedly gave a false story. We will not abide misconduct or coverups from those who are supposed to secure our jails, and from those who work with juvenile detainees.”

Commissioner Margaret Garnett said, “These defendants, entrusted with the care of youth in secure detention facilities, sowed further violence and disorder instead of diffusing it, according to the charges. Excessive force by Correction Officers and attempts to cover up those actions with false information, misstatements, and evidence tampering cannot be tolerated and will be fully investigated and prosecuted. DOI thanks the Bronx District Attorney’s Office for their partnership in securing today’s indictments and ensuring that youth in our juvenile system are protected from wanton behavior by officers working in these facilities.”

District Attorney Clark said the defendants, Edenuel Serrano, Keith Glover and Tahiem Stewart, were arraigned today before Bronx Supreme Court Justice Lester Adler. The defendants are due back in court on June 10, 2020. Serrano was charged with Attempted Assault in the third degree and Tampering with Physical Evidence; Glover was charged with Attempted Assault in the third-degree and third-degree Assault; Stewart was charged with third-degree Assault. Additionally, all three defendants were charged with Official Misconduct, first-degree and second-degree Offering a False Instrument for Filing, and first-degree and second-degree Falsifying Business Records.



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According to the investigation, on April 8, 2019, at Horizon Juvenile Center in the Bronx, a facility then jointly operated by Administration for Children's Services and the New York City Department of Correction for pre-trial detention of 17-year-olds, the defendants entered a 17-year-old resident's room to allegedly start a fight with that resident, who had earlier had an argument with Serrano. Once inside the room, Serrano allegedly placed the resident in a chokehold. Upon seeing the resident in distress, two other 17-year-old residents entered the room and joined the fight, followed by Glover and Stewart. While the three officers fought the three residents, Stewart allegedly punched a resident in the face, causing him to bleed on the bedsheets and on the floor of the targeted resident's room.

According to the investigation, video from the facility then showed Serrano removing the bedsheets from the room, walking them through the facility, and then handing them off to another officer who then brought the sheets into an office area with no cameras. Approximately 20 minutes later, Serrano was seen exiting the facility holding a black trash bag, which he put in his car before driving off. The sheets were never recovered.

According to the investigation, the officers did not report the incident as required by DOC policy on use of force. The residents complained to the New York State Office of Children and Family Services the next day. OCFS then notified the facility. The officers were ordered to complete use of force reports. In their reports, they offered a narrative of the incident that was at odds with the video and with testimony from other witnesses. Serrano, in particular, reported that he removed the bedsheets from the resident's room because the resident complained to him after the incident that he had had a nosebleed the night before. However, DNA swabs taken in that resident's room and analyzed by the Office of Chief Medical Examiner revealed that the blood belonged to the other resident, who had been punched in the face.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Brian Connor of the Public Integrity Bureau, under the supervision of Omer Wiczuk, Chief of the Public Integrity Bureau, and the overall supervision of Tarek Rahman, Deputy Chief of the Investigations Division. District Attorney Clark thanked BXDA Detective Investigators Jairo Jativa, Christopher Scerbak, Iftekhhar Khan and Debra Koch; and Trial Preparation Assistant Annarese Marcano and Assistant District Attorney Sean McCauley of the Public Integrity Bureau, for their assistance in the case.

District Attorney Clark thanked DOI Assistant Inspector General Mercedes Bayon and Confidential Investigator Alexandra Caruana for their assistance in the case. District Attorney Clark thanked DOC Investigation Division Deputy Commissioner Sarena Townsend, Assistant Commissioner Ruben Benitez, Deputy Director Maureen Sheehan, Deputy Director Kristine



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Djonovic and Supervising Investigator Jessica Weinbrecht for their assistance in the case. District Attorney Clark thanked the New York State Justice Center for their assistance.

An indictment is an accusatory instrument and not proof of a defendant's guilt.

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