



UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
Southern District of New York

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**FORMER RIKERS CORRECTIONAL OFFICER PLEADS GUILTY TO
SMUGGLING CONTRABAND FOR INMATES**

Audrey Strauss, the Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, William F. Sweeney Jr., Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), and Margaret Garnett, the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced today that JOSHUA ALBA pled guilty before United States Magistrate Judge Robert W. Lehrburger to one count of conspiring to commit honest services wire fraud, for his role in smuggling packages containing contraband to inmates detained at the Anna M. Kross Center ("AMKC") on Rikers Island, in return for thousands of dollars in cash bribes.

Acting U.S. Attorney Audrey Strauss said: "As he has now admitted, Joshua Alba abused his authority as a correctional officer to smuggle contraband into a prison facility in return for cash bribes. Contraband smuggling schemes threaten the security of our prisons and jeopardize the safety of inmates and other guards, and my office will continue to aggressively pursue those correctional officers who betray their duties for the lure of easy money."

FBI Assistant Director William F. Sweeney Jr. said: "Keeping illegal contraband out of our jails is an ongoing challenge for corrections officers. It's hard to imagine why an insider on the job would assist with this process, the results of which put everyone in the facility at risk. There's no excuse for this type of irresponsible and illegal behavior. Today's arrest has effectively landed Alba on the other side of the law."

DOI Commissioner Margaret Garnett said: "This former City Correction Officer allegedly used his access and influence to funnel contraband into Rikers Island in exchange for thousands of dollars in cash, according to the charges. This scheme isn't original; it isn't inventive, but it is dangerous for staff and inmates and must be acted on swiftly through rigorous investigation and prosecution. DOI thanks the Acting U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of

New York and the New York Field Office of the FBI for their partnership in uncovering this alleged crime.”

According to allegations in the criminal complaint, the information, and other documents filed in federal court, as well as statements made in public court proceedings:

Rules and regulations promulgated by the New York City Department of Correction (“NYCDOC”) prohibit correction officers and other staff from introducing or delivering contraband into NYCDOC facilities, and provide that “[e]mployees shall not enter into any transaction with an inmate, nor carry, convey, or make accessible to an inmate within a facility/command any intoxicant, opiate, narcotic, or other contraband article, nor traffic with an inmate in any manner.”

As alleged in the Information and Complaint, and as he admitted today in court, at various points during the course of this scheme JOSHUA ALBA flouted those rules and regulations by agreeing to deliver contraband, including tobacco, to a particular inmate (“Inmate-1”), who was housed in the section of the AMKC to which ALBA typically was assigned during his tours of duty in return for cash bribes. ALBA obtained the contraband from an individual in the Bronx (“CC-1”), who arranged the deliveries in coded conversations with Inmate-1 that occurred over recorded prison phone calls. ALBA made these contraband deliveries from at least December 2018 until July 2019, in return for at least \$5,000 in cash bribes.

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ALBA, 30, of Queens, New York, pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit honest services wire fraud, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison. The maximum potential sentence in this case is prescribed by Congress, and is provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the judge. ALBA is scheduled to be sentenced by United States District Judge Lorna G. Schofield on a date to be determined.

Ms. Strauss praised the outstanding investigative work of the FBI and DOI.

The prosecution of this case is being handled by the Office’s Public Corruption Unit. Assistant United States Attorneys Lara Pomerantz and Jarrod L. Schaeffer are in charge of the prosecution.

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