



U.S. Department of Justice

Breon Peace

United States Attorney

Eastern District of New York

*271 Cadman Plaza East
Brooklyn, New York 11201*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact:

John Marzulli

Danielle Blustein Hass

United States Attorney's Office

(718) 254-6323

PRESS RELEASE

**FORMER NEW YORK CITY CORRECTION OFFICER SENTENCED TO 29 MONTHS
IN PRISON FOR SMUGGLING CONTRABAND INTO RIKERS ISLAND IN
EXCHANGE FOR NEARLY \$10,000 IN BRIBE PAYMENTS**

Defendant Smuggled Cell Phones and Accepted Payments for Narcotics

Earlier today in federal court in Brooklyn, former New York City correction officer Krystle Burrell was sentenced by United States District Judge Kiyoo A. Matsumoto to 29 months' imprisonment for accepting nearly \$10,000 in bribe payments in exchange for smuggling contraband into Rikers Island. Burrell was employed by the New York City Department of Corrections (DOC) and worked as a correction officer at Rikers Island.

Breon Peace, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, Ivan J. Arvelo, Special Agent-in-Charge, Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations, New York (HSI), Jocelyn E. Strauber, Commissioner, New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), and Edward A. Caban, Commissioner, New York City Police Department (NYPD), announced the sentence.

"Krystle Burrell put her own interests above the safety of incarcerated individuals and other correction officers at Rikers Island by accepting payments for drugs and smuggling cell phones into the jail she was supposed to protect," stated United States Attorney Peace. "Public corruption is especially harmful when it affects the safety and security of our city's jails and today's sentence demonstrates that correction officers face serious consequences for smuggling contraband into Rikers Island."

DOI Commissioner Jocelyn E. Strauber said, "New York City Correction Officers' most significant responsibility is to maintain order and safety in our City's jails. By accepting bribes and smuggling contraband onto Rikers Island, this defendant endangered both the persons in custody, and fellow officers, that she was entrusted to protect. Her prison sentence sends a strong message that officers who misuse their positions of trust will be held accountable."

I thank the US Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of New York for their partnership in our joint efforts to eradicate contraband smuggling in the City jail system.”

“Bringing contraband into a correctional facility undermines the security of the institution and threatens the residents and the officers tasked with keeping them safe,” stated NYPD Commissioner Caban. “Above all else, correction officers are public servants – the majority of whom honor their oaths and serve as stellar examples to the community and those under their care. Ms. Burrell, who blatantly abused her position of authority, was the exact opposite.”

According to court documents and facts presented at today’s sentencing proceeding, Burrell accepted nearly \$10,000 in bribes from co-conspirators on behalf of co-defendant Terrae Hinds in exchange for Burrell smuggling contraband into the Anna M. Kross Center on Rikers Island for Hinds. Burrell also accepted payments on behalf of Hinds for narcotics and other contraband so that Hinds could resell the contraband on Rikers Island. After she pleaded guilty in federal court in September 2022 to bribery charges and while on bail pending sentencing, Burrell conspired with Hinds and others to smuggle contraband into the federal Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn where Hinds had been transferred and was being held on federal charges. In March 2023, Burrell was charged with the additional crime of smuggling contraband into a federal prison. Burrell pleaded guilty to smuggling contraband into a federal detention facility and she was also sentenced today for this additional crime.

Hinds previously pleaded guilty to bribing Burrell and is currently awaiting sentencing.

The government’s case is being handled by the Office’s Public Integrity Section. Assistant United States Attorney Philip Pilmar is in charge of the prosecution.

The Defendants:

KRYSTLE BURRELL
Age: 36
Lawrence, NY

E.D.N.Y. Docket Nos. 22-CR-196 (KAM); 23-CR-207 (KAM)