



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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**FORMER CIVILIAN PROGRAM COUNSELOR AT DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION CHARGED
WITH ACCEPTING BRIBES TO SMUGGLE CONTRABAND INTO RIKERS ISLAND**

Jocelyn E. Strauber, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), issued the following statement today on the arrest of a former civilian Program Counselor with the New York City Department of Correction ("DOC") on charges of smuggling contraband - marijuana, tobacco and drug-soaked papers - to persons in custody at the Rose M. Singer Enhanced Supervision Housing unit ("RESH") on Rikers Island in exchange for approximately \$5,000 dollars in bribes. DOC notified DOI of the discovery of suspected marijuana in the defendant's desk at one of the Rikers Island facilities. DOI investigated this matter with the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") and the office of the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, which is prosecuting the case.

NATHANEAL HENRY, 34, of Brooklyn, N.Y. was charged with one count each of Conspiracy to Solicit and Receive a Bribe by an Agent of an Organization Receiving Federal Funds and Conspiracy to Distribute a Controlled Substance and appeared before U.S. Magistrate Judge Stewart D. Aaron in the Southern District of New York. Upon conviction, these offenses are punishable by up to five years' and up to 10 years' imprisonment, respectively. HENRY was released on bail and his next court date is June 9, 2025.

DOI Commissioner Jocelyn E. Strauber said, "This DOC Program Counselor was trusted to provide counseling and rehabilitative services in a custodial setting. Instead, as charged, he abused his position and access to Rikers Island facilities to smuggle narcotics in exchange for money, jeopardizing the welfare of his colleagues, Correction Officers, and inmates for his own financial gain. I thank the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York and the FBI for their continued partnership and commitment to stop contraband from entering the City's jails. I commend the DOC employee who reported potential contraband in the facilities, and DOC leadership for notifying DOI, which led to this investigation."

According to the criminal complaint, between October 2023 and June 2024, HENRY repeatedly abused his position of trust when he accepted thousands of dollars in bribes from four different inmates and their associates in exchange for smuggling contraband, including marijuana and tobacco, into a Rikers Island facility on multiple occasions. On April 20, 2024, HENRY contacted DOC Employee-1 via social media and informed that employee that he had left a "package" inside of the office of another DOC employee ("DOC Employee-2"). HENRY requested that DOC Employee-1 go to work early, remove the package and place it in another location. DOC Employee-1 declined this request. DOC Employee-2 submitted a written report to DOC indicating that he discovered inside of a drawer in his DOC workspace a package containing a green, leafy substances concealed within certain paperwork, which later tested positive for the presence of marijuana. This investigation also found that HENRY smuggled in contraband

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on at least five occasions for four separate inmates at RESH, accepting bribes of between \$720 and up to \$1,500 on each occasion:

- Inmate-1 approached HENRY and discussed smuggling in tobacco and marijuana in exchange for \$1,200. At Inmate-1's direction, HENRY met a non-incarcerated individual in Brooklyn, who provided HENRY with \$1,200 in cash and two vacuum-sealed packages, one that contained marijuana and another that contained tobacco, which HENRY later concealed inside paperwork and smuggled to Inmate-1.
- HENRY also agreed to smuggle in additional marijuana and tobacco for Inmate-1 under a similar arrangement and was paid \$720. HENRY hid one of the packages that contained marijuana inside a filing cabinet at work and when he returned he learned the package had been found by another DOC employee.
- HENRY smuggled in marijuana and tobacco for Inmate-2 in exchange for \$1,500, receiving the money on Cash App from a non-incarcerated individual associated with Inmate-2. HENRY purchased marijuana and tobacco, placing them in two, separate packages and delivered them to Inmate-2. Henry told investigators that he feared getting "shot" if he did not smuggle contraband for Inmate-2.
- HENRY smuggled in marijuana, tobacco and drug-soaked papers for Inmate-3 in exchange for thousands of dollars, receiving approximately \$1,500 either on Cash App or in cash from a non-incarcerated individual associated with Inmate-3, who provided HENRY with the contraband.
- HENRY smuggled in marijuana to Inmate-4 and was paid approximately \$972 on Cash App in exchange.

Henry began employment at DOC in December 2022 and, as a result of this investigation, he resigned in July 2024. At the time of his resignation, he was receiving a salary of approximately \$60,880.

Commissioner Strauber thanked Jay Clayton, United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, for his office's partnership on this investigation, which is being handled by the Public Corruption Unit's Co-Chief Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert Sobelman. Commissioner Strauber also thanked Assistant Director in Charge of the New York Field Office Christopher G. Raia, and his staff, for their work on the investigation, and DOC Commissioner Lynelle Maginley-Liddie and her agency's Special Investigative Unit for their cooperation and assistance.

The investigation was conducted by DOC Investigator Matty Lupinacci who is assigned to DOI's Office of the Inspector General for DOC, and was supervised by Assistant Inspector General Sasha Holguin, Deputy Inspector General Sony Fortune, Inspector General Marissa Carro, Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Initiatives Christopher Ryan, and Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Dominick Zarrella.

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

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