



The City of New York  
Department of Investigation

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FORMER CORRECTION OFFICER SENTENCED TO SIX MONTHS IN PRISON  
FOR ACCEPTING BRIBES TO SMUGGLE NARCOTICS INTO RIKERS ISLAND**

Jocelyn E. Strauber, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (“DOI”), issued a statement today on the sentencing of GHISLAINE BARRIENTOS, a former Correction Officer with the City Department of Correction (“DOC”), for participating in a scheme to smuggle contraband, including cocaine, smokeable synthetic cannabinoids (known as “K2”), and food, to persons in custody at the Robert N. Davoren Complex on Rikers Island in return for thousands of dollars in bribes. DOI conducted this investigation with the New York Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”) and the Office of the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, which prosecuted the case.

BARRIENTOS, 37, of Mount Vernon, N.Y., was charged in October 2024 with one count of conspiracy to commit honest services wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to distribute controlled substances and one count of false statements. The defendant pled guilty in January 2025 to one count of conspiracy to commit federal program bribery, and was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Gregory H. Woods to six months in prison, followed by two years of post-incarceration supervision, six months of which will be under home detention. BARRIENTOS was also ordered to forfeit \$11,866, which represents the proceeds of the offense.

DOI Commissioner Jocelyn E. Strauber said, “By accepting bribes in exchange for smuggling narcotics into Rikers Island facilities, this former Correction Officer endangered her fellow officers and compromised the well-being of persons in custody for her personal financial gain. The sentence imposed today sends a strong message that we and our law enforcement partners will not tolerate corruption that jeopardizes the security of the City’s jails. 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 this effort.”

As reflected in the Complaint, Information, and statements made in court, BARRIENTOS engaged in a scheme with an inmate (“Inmate-1”) and Inmate-1’s associate (CC-1”). For example, on April 11, 2024, CC-1 and BARRIENTOS discussed CC-1 sending BARRIENTOS a package through a delivery service. On April 15, 2024, surveillance footage showed BARRIENTOS entering Inmate-1’s cell. Two days later, DOC searched Inmate-1’s cell and recovered sheets of paper that tested positive for the presence of cocaine.

On April 24, 2024, CC-1 sent BARRIENTOS another package using the delivery service. When BARRIENTOS went to work later that day, a drug-detecting canine alerted for the presence of narcotics. DOC employees searched BARRIENTOS’s belongings and found approximately 10 sheets of paper that tested positive for the presence of K2. In an interview with law enforcement, BARRIENTOS falsely stated, among other things, that no inmate had ever asked her to bring them contraband. Law enforcement

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officers then searched BARRIENTOS's vehicle and recovered additional sheets of paper, as well as approximately \$2,466 in cash.

BARRIENTOS began employment at DOC in June 2016. At the time of her resignation in May 2024, she was receiving a salary of approximately \$101,590.

Commissioner Strauber thanked Matthew Podolsky, Acting U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York for the Office's partnership on this investigation, which was handled by the Public Corruption Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeffrey Coyle was in charge of the prosecution. Commissioner Strauber also thanked the New York Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and its staff for their work on the investigation, and DOC Commissioner Lynelle Maginley-Liddie for her and her staff's cooperation.

At DOI, the investigation was conducted by DOI's Office of the Inspector General for the DOC by Investigators Ernesto Gonzalez and Jorge Miranda, supervised by Deputy Inspector General Sony Fortune, Inspector General Marissa Carro, Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Initiatives Christopher Ryan, and Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Dominick Zarrella.

*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.*

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