

Former Border Patrol Agent Sentenced on Bribery Charges

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For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Western District of Texas

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EL PASO – An El Paso man was sentenced today to 18 months in prison for bribery of public official.

According to court documents, in June 2023, Fernando Castillo, 42, who was a Border Patrol Agent with the United States Border Patrol (Customs and Border Protection), solicited a \$5,000 bribe from a citizen of El Salvador and Mexico. Castillo told the foreign national that in exchange for a payment of \$5,000 Castillo could provide immigration paperwork that would permit the individual to remain in the United States. Castillo made false entries in the individual's immigration file and printed the fraudulent document. Shortly after he met with the individual, agents apprehended Castillo in possession of the false documentation.

On February 1, 2024, Castillo pled guilty to one count of bribery of a public official.

On May 9, 2024, Castillo was sentenced to 18 months in prison, one year of supervised release, and a \$100 special assessment.

"A federal officer who sells his office for personal gain shatters public trust in government officials," said U.S. Attorney Jaime Esparza. "Unfortunately, Castillo's crime unfairly tarnishes the honest officers who serve the public with dedication day in and day out. We will eagerly hold officers like Castillo accountable."

"Fernando Castillo engaged in conduct that betrayed the oath he took to faithfully serve the citizens of the United States of America," said Special Agent in Charge John Morales of the FBI El Paso Field Office. "His behavior should not take away from the outstanding work done each day by the vast majority of law enforcement professionals at U.S. Border Patrol. The FBI encourages the public to continue to support our active and ongoing efforts to root out public corruption by reporting corrupt activity to the FBI El Paso Field Office at (915) 832-5000."

"CBP takes all allegations of misconduct seriously," said CBP OPR Acting Special Agent in Charge Rosa P. Mendez-Mier. "CBP's Office of Professional Responsibility is proud to be a part of the Border

Corruption Task Force and appreciates the hard work of all of the investigative agencies that contributed to this outcome.”

The FBI, Department of Homeland Security-Office of Inspector General, and United States Customs and Border Protection-Office of Professional Responsibility investigated the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorney John Johnston prosecuted the case.

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