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[Divisions](#) ▼

[News](#)

[Programs](#) ▼

[Careers](#)

[Contact Us](#) ▼

[Justice.gov](#) > [U.S. Attorneys](#) > [District of Arizona](#) > [Press Releases](#) > [Former Border Patrol Agent Sentenced To More Than 12 Years On Bribery, Firearms, and Narcotics Charges](#)

PRESS RELEASE

Former Border Patrol Agent Sentenced to More Than 12 Years on Bribery, Firearms, and Narcotics Charges

Tuesday, December 27, 2022

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Arizona

TUCSON, Ariz. – Ramon Antonio Monreal-Rodriguez, 36, of Vail, Arizona, was sentenced on December 14, by United States District Judge James A. Soto, to 152 months in prison and ordered to pay \$151,000 in restitution to the U.S. Border Patrol for salary drawn while engaged in criminal activity. Monreal-Rodriguez previously pleaded guilty to Bribery, Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute Cocaine and Marijuana, Conspiracy to Make False Statements in Connection with the Acquisition of Firearms, and Conspiracy to Provide Firearms to a Convicted Felon, for his role in three separate conspiracies in two federal criminal cases.

“The men and women of the United States Border Patrol safeguard our frontier with compassion and dignity,” said United States Attorney Gary Restaino. “Most Border Patrol Agents are excellent public servants who diligently interdict contraband like guns and drugs. For those who aren’t and don’t, the Bureau of Prisons has plenty of room. Many thanks to our law enforcement partners on the Southern Arizona Corruption Task Force and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives for their hard work in putting this case together.”

Between July and August 2018, Monreal-Rodriguez, a former U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) agent, was involved in two firearm-related conspiracies wherein he both unlawfully purchased firearms from federally licensed firearms dealers on behalf of other individuals and provided firearms to felons, who are prohibited from possessing firearms.

While the investigations into the firearms conspiracies were ongoing, Monreal-Rodriguez also conspired to import narcotics into the United States from Mexico, from January 8, 2018, until his arrest on September 25, 2018. During this time, a drug trafficking organization he worked with smuggled narcotics across the border. Monreal-Rodriguez would retrieve the narcotics and take them past the checkpoint several miles from the border — often in his USBP vehicle — and then transport the drugs to the Tucson area. He admitted to distributing 116 kilograms of cocaine and 107 kilograms of marijuana as part of the conspiracy.

Additionally, Monreal-Rodriguez admitted to receiving cash proceeds from narcotics sales totaling at least \$1.2 million, which he transported to the United States-Mexico border and then handed off to other individuals so the cash could be smuggled into Mexico. In exchange for his role in the narcotics conspiracy, Monreal-Rodriguez received cash payments.

In violation of his duties as a USBP agent, Monreal-Rodriguez used his border patrol vehicle and its radio to securely transport the smuggled narcotics and cash proceeds. Further, he was in possession of his service weapon when he picked up the narcotics and dropped off the drug proceeds.

This case was investigated by the Southern Arizona Corruption Task Force (SACTF) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. The SACTF is comprised of members from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Homeland Security - Office of Inspector General, Immigration and Customs Enforcement - Office of Professional Responsibility, Customs and Border Protection - Office of Professional Responsibility, the Tucson Police Department, and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

The United States Attorney's Office, District of Arizona, Tucson, handled the prosecution.

CASE NUMBER: CR-18-02215-TUC-JAS-1
CR-18-01905-TUC-JAS-1
RELEASE NUMBER: 2022-133_Monreal-Rodriguez

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Updated December 27, 2022

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Release Number: 2022-133_Monreal-Rodriguez