



U.S. Department of Justice

Richard P. Donoghue
United States Attorney
Eastern District of New York

271 Cadman Plaza East
Brooklyn, New York 11201

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 24, 2018

Contact:

John Marzulli
Tyler Daniels
United States Attorney's Office
(718) 254-6323

PRESS RELEASE

FORMER FEDERAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICER SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS IN PRISON FOR SEXUAL ABUSE, BRIBERY AND NARCOTICS CHARGES

Defendant Sexually Abused Three Female Inmates at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn and Received Thousands of Dollars in Bribes to Smuggle Narcotics into the Jail

Earlier today, in federal court in Brooklyn, Armando Moronta, who previously served as a federal correctional officer employed by the United States Bureau of Prisons (BOP) at the Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC), was sentenced by United States District Judge Roslynn R. Mauskopf to 10 years' imprisonment for four counts of sexual abuse of a ward, one count of soliciting bribes as a public official and one count of conspiring to distribute narcotics. The charges stemmed from two separate indictments. As part of his sentence, Moronta is also required to forfeit \$15,000 in bribe payments and to register as a sex offender. Moronta was suspended by the BOP in January 2017 after his initial arrest, and he pleaded guilty in November 2017. Moronta resigned from the BOP in December 2017.

Richard P. Donoghue, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, Guido Modano, Special Agent-in-Charge, United States Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General (DOJ-OIG), and William F. Sweeney, Jr., Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI), announced the sentence.

"Over a period of months, Moronta flagrantly violated his sworn duty as a law enforcement officer, sexually abused inmates entrusted to his supervision and undermined the safety of his fellow officers and others in exchange for bribes," stated United States Attorney Donoghue. "Today's sentence reflects the seriousness of the defendant's crimes and demonstrates our steadfast commitment to holding accountable correctional officers who abuse their power and the inmates they are responsible for."

"Moronta engaged in an egregious abuse of power and breach of the public's trust. Today's sentence demonstrates that such corruption will not be tolerated in our federal prisons or our law enforcement community," stated DOJ-OIG Special Agent-in-Charge Modano.

“The DOJ-OIG will work tirelessly to hold individuals who engage in such conduct accountable to the fullest extent of the law.”

“Corrections officers are in place to maintain order, not flagrantly abuse their power. Mr. Moronta not only accepted money for smuggling in contraband, he sexually abused female inmates,” stated FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge Sweeney. “The abuse of power by officers sworn to protect is one of the FBI’s priorities because no one is above the law, especially those who took an oath to uphold it.”

Between March and December 2016, on approximately 12 occasions, Moronta smuggled cellular telephones and narcotics, including the synthetic narcotic “K2” and Suboxone, into the MDC for use and distribution by male inmates in exchange for thousands of dollars in bribe payments. Separately, between May and June 2016, Moronta engaged in criminal sexual acts with three female inmates in his custody while he was assigned to guard their unit. He committed these criminal sexual acts inside the Guard’s Office located within a female housing unit.

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

The Defendant:

ARMANDO MORONTA

Age: 40

Brooklyn, New York

E.D.N.Y. Docket Nos. 17-CR-036 (RRM) and 17-CR-279 (RRM)