

# Former corrections officer admits to accepting bribes

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**For Immediate Release**

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

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – A 26-year-old Three Rivers man has entered a guilty plea to bribery of a public official, announced U.S. Attorney Alamdar S. Hamdani.

Justin Matthew Gonzalez was a former corrections officer with the federal Bureau of Prisons at the Three Rivers Correctional Institution.

As part of his plea, he admitted to receiving approximately \$1,600 in what he described as “bribe” payments in return for smuggling cigarettes into the facility. When he reported to work on or about Feb. 11, 2021, authorities searched his bag and discovered 16 packets of cigarettes.

*“Public service is a public trust, especially for those in positions in corrections and law enforcement,” said Hamdani. “The vast majority of these officers serve with honesty and integrity. However, we must still root out any and all forms of corruption or abuse in our federal prisons and hold accountable those who choose to break the law themselves.”*

“Gonzalez’s selfish acts compromised the safety and security of the federal prison. The Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General (DOJ-OIG) is committed to rooting out bribery schemes and bringing perpetrators to justice,” said Special Agent in Charge Cloey C. Pierce, DOJ-OIG, South Central Region.

U.S. District Judge David S. Morales will impose sentencing Nov. 20. At that time, Gonzalez faces up to 15 years in federal prison and a possible \$250,000 maximum fine.

Gonzalez was permitted to remain on bond pending that hearing.

The Department of Justice - Office of Inspector General conducted the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Lisa Collins and Carolyn Ferko are prosecuting the case.