



Department of Justice

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Northern District of Texas**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA INQUIRIES: KATHY COLVIN

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Correctional Officer Indicted for Accepting Bribes

ABILENE, Texas — Matthew Castaneda, 23, of Big Spring, Texas, was arrested yesterday on a federal indictment, returned by a grand jury last week and unsealed today, charging him with one count of bribery of public officials. Castaneda made his initial appearance in federal court today before U.S. Magistrate Judge E. Scott Frost, and entered a not guilty plea to the charge. He was released on his own recognizance. Today's announcement was made by U.S. Attorney Sarah R. Saldaña of the Northern District of Texas.

The indictment alleges that from September 14, 2013, to approximately December 13, 2012, Castaneda, who at the time was employed as a Correctional Officer at the Big Spring Correctional Center, brought contraband to an inmate, in the form of cell phones, in exchange for money from that inmate.

An indictment is an accusation by a federal grand jury, and a defendant is entitled to the presumption of innocence unless proven guilty. If convicted, however, Castaneda faces a maximum statutory penalty of 15 years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine.

The investigation was conducted by the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General. Assistant U.S. Attorney Paulina Jacobo is in charge of the prosecution.

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