



## NEWS RELEASE

**Eileen M. Decker**

United States Attorney  
Central District of California

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Thom Mrozek, Public Affairs Officer

[thom.mrozek@usdoj.gov](mailto:thom.mrozek@usdoj.gov)

(213) 894-6947

[www.justice.gov/usao-cdca](http://www.justice.gov/usao-cdca)

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### **Federal Correctional Officer Arrested on Charges of Assaulting Inmate**

*RIVERSIDE, California* – A correctional officer employed by the U.S. Bureau of Prisons at the Victorville Federal Correctional Complex has been arrested on federal civil rights and assault charges stemming from an incident in which she allegedly kicked a female inmate in the head.

Cynthia Flores, 34, of Victorville, was arrested yesterday afternoon and is scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon on charges in a four-count indictment.

Flores is charged in an indictment that was returned by a federal grand jury on September 7. The indictment accuses Flores of deprivation of rights under color of law, assault with a dangerous weapon with intent to do bodily harm, falsifying records and making false statements and concealing material facts in a matter within the jurisdiction of the United States Department of Justice.

The charges stem from an incident in which Flores allegedly assaulted an inmate at the women's prison camp in Victorville on June 2, 2013. During the evening count, when correctional officers ensure that all inmates are present, Flores initiated a physical altercation with the victim inmate. After the inmate's hands were placed in restraints behind her back, and she was held chest down on the floor, Flores allegedly kicked the inmate in the head.

"Law enforcement officers have a duty to uphold the civil rights of all Americans, and, when those rights are violated, we must act decisively," said United States Attorney Eileen M. Decker. "No citizen should have to suffer the physical abuse by a law enforcement authority alleged in this case. Such abuse not only undermines the integrity of our justice system, but undermines the professional work being done by the vast majority of correctional officers."

Following the incident, Flores allegedly submitted both a written incident report and a videotaped oral report in which she described a verbal and physical altercation with the inmate. The indictment alleges that Flores falsely stated that the inmate had assaulted her, when it was actually Flores who assaulted the inmate by pushing the inmate into a wall, striking her and kicking her in the head.

*An indictment contains allegations that a defendant has committed a crime. Every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in court.*

If she is convicted on all counts, Flores would face up to 45 years in prison.

This case was investigated by the Justice Department's Office of the Inspector General. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Sean D. Peterson of the Riverside Branch Office.

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