



U.S. Department of Justice

Bridget M. Rohde
Acting United States Attorney
Eastern District of New York

271 Cadman Plaza East
Brooklyn, New York 11201

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 8, 2017

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

PRESS RELEASE

**FEDERAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICER PLEADS GUILTY TO BRIBERY,
NARCOTICS AND SEXUAL ABUSE CHARGES**

***Defendant Received Thousands of Dollars in Bribes to Smuggle Drugs into a Federal Prison
in Brooklyn and Sexually Abused Three Female Inmates***

Earlier today, Armando Moronta pled guilty at the federal courthouse in Brooklyn to bribery, narcotics conspiracy and four counts of sexual abuse of a ward. At the time of the offenses, Moronta was a federal correctional officer employed by the United States Bureau of Prisons (BOP) at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, New York (MDC); he was suspended by the BOP after his initial arrest on bribery and narcotics charges. The charges stem from two separate indictments. When sentenced, Moronta faces up to 20 years in prison on the narcotics conspiracy charge and 15 years in prison on each of the bribery and sexual abuse charges. Moronta has also agreed to forfeiture of \$15,000 in bribe payments and is required to register as a sex offender. The proceeding took place before United States District Judge Roslynn R. Mauskopf.

Bridget M. Rohde, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, Ronald G. Gardella, Special Agent-in-Charge, United States Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General, New York Field Office (DOJ OIG), and William F. Sweeney, Jr., Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI), announced the plea.

“In a fundamental breach of his duties as a public servant, former federal correctional officer Moronta compromised the safety of the MDC by allowing inmates to have prohibited goods and abusing inmates sexually,” stated Acting United States Attorney Rohde. “This case serves as a reminder that correctional officers who would so compromise the well-being of their colleagues and charges will be held accountable to the fullest extent of the law.”

“Corruption and abuse of power have no place in our federal correctional system and will not be tolerated,” stated DOJ OIG Special Agent-in-Charge Gardella. “Moronta’s conduct shattered the safety of his victims and imperiled the security of the MDC. The OIG will

continue to work closely with the BOP and our law enforcement partners to ensure that individuals who abuse the public's trust in this manner are brought to justice.”

“While the vast majority of law enforcement officers carry out their duties with honor and dignity, Moronta did not,” stated Assistant Director-in-Charge Sweeney. “May this case serve as an example to anyone who dares to threaten the integrity of the law enforcement profession—just because you're awarded a badge of honor, it doesn't mean you can hide behind the shield.”

According to court filings and facts presented during the plea proceeding, 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 contact and acts with three female inmates, including fondling a female inmate and causing inmates to perform oral sex on him while he was assigned to guard their unit.

The government's bribery and narcotics case is being handled by the Office's Public Integrity and International Narcotics and Money Laundering Sections. Assistant United States Attorneys Nadia Shihata and Andrew Gilman are in charge of that prosecution. The government's sexual abuse case is being handled by the Office's Public Integrity Section. Assistant United States Attorney Nadia Shihata is in charge of that prosecution.

The Defendant:

ARMANDO MORONTA

Age: 39

Brooklyn, NY

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