

PRESS RELEASE

Miami-Dade County Woman Pleads Guilty To Providing Contraband To A Coleman Prisoner

Friday, January 24, 2025

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Middle District of Florida

Ocala, Florida – United States Attorney Roger B. Handberg announces that Janai Chanel Stephens (38, Opa Locka) entered guilty pleas to an indictment charging her with making a materially false statement or representation to a federal agency and providing contraband to a federal prisoner. Stephens faces up to five years in federal prison. A sentencing date has not yet been scheduled. A federal grand jury indicted Stephens on May 28, 2024.

According to court records, on March 10, 2024, Stephens entered the Coleman Federal Correctional Complex in Sumter County with a bag containing tobacco cigarettes that she intended to give to a federal inmate. Federal inmates are prohibited from possessing tobacco in prisons, as it threatens the order, discipline, and security of the prison. When entering the facility, Stephens falsely claimed to a corrections officer that she did not have any tobacco products in her possession. Stephens was then permitted to meet with a federal inmate in a visitation room. During that meeting, surveillance footage showed Stephens throwing the bag with the cigarettes that she had smuggled into the prison to the inmate.

This case is being prosecuted as part of a United States Department of Justice (DOJ) task force aimed at rooting out contraband and misconduct in the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP). The task force was led by the BOP and the DOJ - Office of the Inspector General, with support from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Florida.

This case was investigated by the BOP and the DEA. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Hannah Nowalk Watson.