

PRESS RELEASE

Federal Correctional Officer Pleads Guilty to Receipt of a Bribe by a Public Official

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

For Immediate Release

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

Ocala, Florida – Karen Torres (50, St. Cloud) has pleaded guilty to receiving a bribe as a public official. She faces a maximum penalty of 15 years in federal prison. As part of her plea, Torres has agreed to forfeit \$43,550, which represents the proceeds of her criminal offense. Her sentencing date has not yet been set. United States Attorney Gregory W. Kehoe made the announcement.

According to court records, Torres was a public official employed by the United States Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons, as a correctional officer. She worked at the Coleman Federal Correctional Complex (FCC Coleman) in Sumter County. Between May 2022 and March 3, 2025, Torres introduced contraband (marijuana, cigarettes, and K2) into FCC Coleman in exchange for \$43,550 in bribes from inmates.

This case was investigated by the United States Department of Justice Office of Inspector General and the Drug Enforcement Administration. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Hannah Nowalk Watson. Assistant United States Attorney Jennifer Harrington is handling the forfeiture.