

PRESS RELEASE

DEA Supervisor Arrested and Charged in Bribery Conspiracy and Visa Fraud

Friday, February 13, 2026

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Columbia

USADC.Media@usdoj.gov

WASHINGTON – Meliton Cordero, a Supervisory Special Agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration, was arrested yesterday in Washington D.C. and charged in a complaint unsealed today in U.S. District Court in connection with his role in a bribery and U.S. visa fraud scheme, announced U.S. Attorney Jeanine Ferris Pirro.

“This individual was entrusted by the American people to faithfully execute his duties and represent the American Government abroad as a leader within the DEA,” said U.S. Attorney Jeanine Pirro.

“Instead, he is alleged to have broken the law, squandered this special trust and undercut the President’s immigration priorities. This behavior by any government official is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.”

Cordero, 47, has been assigned for six years to the U.S. Embassy in the Dominican Republic. He is charged with conspiracy to commit bribery and visa fraud. According to the charging documents, Cordero allegedly accepted thousands of dollars in exchange for assisting foreign nationals with securing a nonimmigrant visa which would allow them to visit the U.S. for a temporary period.

“The alleged actions do not reflect the thousands of DEA professionals who serve honorably every day dismantling transnational criminal organizations and protecting communities at home and abroad,” said DEA Administrator Terrance Cole. “We remain steadfast in our commitment to professionalism, transparency, and the rule of law.”

In one instance described in the charging documents, Cordero met with a foreign national and provided them with a passport and visa allowing travel to the United States in exchange for cash. During his assignment at the U.S. Embassy in the Dominican

Republic, Cordero expedited at least 119 visa applications, at least one of which is alleged to have been fraudulent, often coaching individuals in preparation for their visa interview with U.S. Consular Officers.

A complaint is a document that explains the charges against a defendant. The complaint is not evidence of a crime. All defendants in criminal cases are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

This case is being investigated by Homeland Security Investigations - Newark Field Office and Homeland Security Investigations – Santo Domingo, the Department of State's Diplomatic Security Service, the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General, and the Drug Enforcement Administration. It is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia.