

Two Paterson Police Officers Charged With Conspiring To Violate Civil Rights

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NEWARK, N.J. – Two Passaic County, New Jersey, men were arrested today for allegedly violating the civil rights of two individuals during a motor vehicle stop in Paterson, New Jersey, with one officer also being charged with extortion for personally accepting a firearm in exchange for reducing the charges on an arrestee, U.S. Attorney Craig Carpenito announced.

Jonathan Bustios, 28, and Eudy Ramos, 31, both of Paterson, New Jersey, were arrested by federal agents this morning and charged by complaint with conspiring to deprive individuals of civil rights under color of law. Bustios was also charged with one count of extortion under color of official right. Both defendants are scheduled to appear this afternoon before U.S. Magistrate Judge Michael A. Hammer in Newark federal court.

According to the complaint:

The investigation uncovered instances in which Bustios and Ramos, both officers of the Paterson Police Department, allegedly stopped motor vehicles, detained the occupants, and searched those vehicles without any justification. On certain occasions, Bustios and Ramos also took cash and other items without

justification before releasing the detained occupants.

For example, on Feb. 20, 2018, while on duty, Bustios pulled over a BMW and stopped behind the vehicle, while Ramos stopped his police car in front of the vehicle. Bustios and Ramos exited their police cars and proceeded to search the front and back of the BMW and the trunk. Bustios and Ramos also detained and searched the two occupants of the BMW and put them into the backseat of Ramos' police car.

After searching the BMW, Bustios left the scene, drove for ten minutes, then stopped his police car and took out a white plastic bag that was filled with cash. Bustios also took out a firearm. He then called Ramos, after which Ramos released the two detained occupants of the BMW and drove to meet Bustios. Bustios passed a portion of the recovered cash to Ramos through the window of Bustios' police car.

Later that day, Bustios and Ramos turned in the firearm that they had recovered. In the offense report pertaining to the firearm, they told a false story about having recovered the firearm due to a tip by a concerned citizen. In fact, there was no tip by a concerned citizen. They did not report to the Paterson Police Department that they had stopped and searched the BMW, detained and searched its occupants, and taken cash, all without any warrants.

Bustios was also charged with extortion under color of official right for an incident that allegedly occurred on March 14, 2018. Bustios arrested and detained an individual and placed the individual in the backseat of his police car. Bustios then told the individual that Bustios would not charge the individual with resisting arrest and would allow the individual to keep the cash that the individual had

on him, in exchange for the individual helping Bustios acquire a firearm. Specifically, Bustios said, “I ain’t gonna charge you with resisting, and I’m letting you keep your money bro.” Bustios then told the individual, “If you don’t wanna make the deal, you don’t have to make the deal.”

The individual ultimately agreed and directed Bustios to the location of a firearm, which Bustios allegedly recovered and kept without turning it over to the Paterson Police Department.

According to Paterson Police Department records, as he had promised, Bustios did not charge the individual with resisting arrest. Bustios also submitted an arrest report in which he failed to mention any details about recovering a firearm.

The conspiracy to violate civil rights count with which Bustios and Ramos are charged carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. The extortion under color of official right count with which Bustios is charged carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison.

The charges and allegations in the complaint are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

U.S. Attorney Carpenito credited special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge Bradley W. Cohen in Newark, with the ongoing investigation leading to today’s arrest. He also thanked the Paterson Police Department, under the direction of Paterson Police Director Jerry Speziale and Police Chief Troy Oswald, as well as the Paterson Police Department Office of Internal Affairs, for their assistance in the investigation.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rahul

Agarwal, Deputy Chief of the U.S. Attorney's Office Criminal
Division.