

# U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officer Sentenced for Civil Rights Violation and Falsifying Records

Thursday, September 26, 2024

**For Immediate Release**

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of New Mexico

**ALBUQUERQUE** – A U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officer was sentenced 20 months in prison for violating the civil rights of a U.S. citizen and falsifying records in a federal investigation.

There is no parole in the federal system.

According to court documents and evidence presented at trial, on June 18, 2019, while working as a U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officer at the Columbus Port of Entry, **Oscar Orrantia**, 38, encountered John Doe, a 63-year-old U.S. citizen. When John Doe complained about the heat while at the port of entry, **Orrantia** became angry and unjustifiably extracted John Doe from his vehicle and performed a “take-down” where he threw John Doe into a side barrier, which resulted in John Doe hitting his head. John Doe sustained bruising to his body and head as a result.

After this altercation, **Orrantia** placed John Doe in handcuffs and took him inside the facility. In his own words, **Orrantia** justified his actions to another officer by stating that he believed John Doe was “fucking being a dick.” Following the incident, **Orrantia** wrote an official report filled with false statements in an attempt to evade accountability for his actions.

The incident came to light after John Doe sought legal counsel from the ACLU, which subsequently filed a lawsuit against **Orrantia** and U.S. Customs and Border Protection. This lawsuit prompted the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Office of Professional Responsibility to review the incident and consult with the U.S. Attorney's Office regarding potential criminal charges.

The investigation uncovered a troubling pattern of misconduct by **Orrantia**. At least two other individuals made allegations of improper behavior during inspections at the Columbus Port of Entry, occurring in August 2019 and June 2020. Additionally, **Orrantia** was involved in a separate incident at a Border Patrol checkpoint in August 2018, where he disregarded proper procedures and his colleagues' authority.

**Orrantia**'s past disciplinary records indicate that he had previously faced consequences for the August 2018 incident, as well as for another incident in May 2020 involving unauthorized visitors and dishonesty during an administrative investigation.

**Orrantia** was convicted by a federal jury of one count of deprivation of a right and one count of falsification of records in December 2023.

Upon his release from prison, **Orrantia** will be subject to three years of supervised release.

U.S. Attorney Alexander M.M. Uballez and Rosa P. Mendez-Mier, Special Agent in Charge of Customs and Border Protection, Office of Professional Responsibility in El Paso, Texas, made the announcement today.

This case was investigated by Customs and Border Protection Office of Professional Responsibility (CBP OPR) with assistance from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, CBP Law Enforcement Safety & Compliance Less Lethal Training Branch, CBP Office of Assistant Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General (DHS OIG) and the United States Marshals Service. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Marisa Ong and Eliot Neal prosecuted this case.

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*Updated September 26, 2024*