

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA  
San Diego, California***

***United States Attorney  
Karen P. Hewitt***

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***For Immediate Release***

**NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY** - April 28, 2009

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that today Juan Hurtado Tapia, a former uniformed officer of the San Diego Police Department, pled guilty in federal court in San Diego to offenses resulting from the misuse of his status as a law enforcement officer to obtain and pass sensitive information to associates involved in drug trafficking crimes. Tapia entered his guilty plea before United States Magistrate Judge Leo S. Papas, subject to final acceptance of the plea by United States District Court Judge Roger T. Benitez, at the time of sentencing.

During the plea hearing today, Tapia admitted that in May 2008 he misused his position as a San Diego Police officer and ran a criminal records check on an individual on behalf of two others. He also admitted that, on both July 9, 2008 and July 11, 2008, when he was asked by federal agents about the reasons why he ran the records check, he knowingly lied to them. In addition, he admitted that at the time he lied to agents on July 9, 2008, he knew that the questions were in reference to a federal drug-trafficking investigation, and he was attempting to impede that investigation.

Tapia is scheduled to appear for acceptance of plea and sentencing before United States District Judge Roger Benitez on July 20, 2009.

**DEFENDANT**

**Case Number: 08cr3281BEN**

Juan Hurtado Tapia

**SUMMARY OF CHARGES**

- Count 1:                   Obstructing, Influencing, or Impeding an Official Proceeding, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1512(c)(2) (Felony)  
Maximum Penalties: 20 years' imprisonment and \$250,000 fine
- Count 2:                   Fraud and Related Activity in Connection with Computers, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1030(a)(2) (Misdemeanor)  
Maximum Penalties: 1 year imprisonment and \$100,000 fine
- Counts 3-4:               False Statement, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1001 (Felony)  
Maximum Penalties: 5 years' imprisonment and \$250,000 fine per count

**PARTICIPATING AGENCIES**

Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Drug Enforcement Administration  
Internal Revenue Service  
U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement  
San Diego Police Department  
Chula Vista Police Department