

NR/MEG/ANW

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- against -

JAMES ALBERT,  
also known as "Jah" and "Jah Blize,"  
[REDACTED]

COMPLAINT

(21 U.S.C. §§ 846, 841(b)(1)(C),  
841(b)(1)(D) and 841(b)(1)(E); 18 U.S.C.  
§§ 371 and 3551 *et seq.*)

20-M-26

CELENA BURGESS,  
VERONICA JAGDEO,  
PATRICK LEGERME,  
also known as "Panama,"  
JONATHAN MEDINA,  
also known as "Trigg," and  
JOHN MOHAMMED,  
also known as "Jason Mohammed,"  
"J-Money" and "Mullah,"

Defendants.

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EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, SS:

CHRISTOPHER KOTTMEIER, being duly sworn, deposes and states that he is a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, duly appointed according to law and acting as such.

In or about and between February 2019 and December 2019, within the Eastern District of New York and elsewhere, the defendants JAMES ALBERT, also known as "Jah" and "Jah Blize," [REDACTED] CELENA BURGESS, VERONICA JAGDEO, PATRICK LEGERME, also known as "Panama," JONATHAN MEDINA, also known as "Trigg," and JOHN MOHAMMED, also known as

“Jason Mohammed,” “J-Money” and “Mulah,” together with others, did knowingly and intentionally conspire to distribute and possess with intent to distribute one or more controlled substances, which offense involved (1) a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of marijuana, a Schedule I controlled substance, (2) a substance containing 5-Fluoro MDMB-Pica, a Schedule I controlled substance, and (3) a substance containing buprenorphine, a Schedule III controlled substance, contrary to Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1).

(Title 21, United States Code, Sections 846, 841(b)(1)(C), 841(b)(1)(D) and 841(b)(1)(E); Title 18, United States Code, Sections 3551 et seq.)

In or about and between February 2019 and December 2019, within the Eastern District of New York and elsewhere, the defendants JAMES ALBERT, also known as “Jah” and “Jah Blize,” [REDACTED] CELENA BURGESS, VERONICA JAGDEO, PATRICK LEGERME, also known as “Panama,” JONATHAN MEDINA, also known as “Trigg,” and JOHN MOHAMMED, also known as “Jason Mohammed,” “J-Money” and “Mulah,” together with others, did knowingly and intentionally conspire to use one or more facilities in interstate and foreign commerce with intent to promote, manage, establish, carry on and facilitate the promotion, management, establishment and carrying on, of one or more unlawful activities, to wit: Bribe Receiving in the Third Degree, contrary to New York Penal Law Section 200.10, and thereafter to perform acts to promote, manage, establish, carry on and facilitate the promotion, management, establishment and carrying on, of such unlawful activity, contrary to Title 18, United States Code, Section 1952(a)(3).

(Title 18, United States Code, Sections 371 and 3551 et seq.)

The source of your deponent's information and the grounds for his belief are as follows:<sup>1</sup>

1. I am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") currently assigned to the Safe Streets Task Force where I investigate, among other things, criminal gangs involved in acts of violence, drug-trafficking and weapons offenses. I am familiar with the facts and circumstances set forth below from my participation in the investigation; my review of the investigative file, including recorded telephone calls, financial and telephone records and the defendants' criminal history records, where applicable; and from reports of and conversations with other law enforcement officers involved in the investigation.

I. Background

2. Starting in or about February 2019, FBI agents and investigators from the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI") have been investigating contraband rings involving, among other things, the payment to and receipt of bribes by New York City Department of Correction ("DOC") correction officers in exchange for the introduction of illegal drugs into the George R. Vierno Center ("GRVC") and the Otis Bantum Correctional Center ("OBCC"). The GRVC and OBCC are correctional facilities located in New York City and are part of the series of DOC facilities located on Rikers Island. In connection with these investigations, agents have, among other things, reviewed telephonic call detail records, financial records, including those related to online monetary transfer tools such as

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<sup>1</sup> Because the purpose of this Complaint is to set forth only those facts necessary to establish probable cause to arrest, I have not described all the relevant facts and circumstances of which I am aware.

Cash App, conducted surveillance, initiated stops of DOC employees prior to their entrance into the GRVC and the OBCC, and seized contraband.

3. Law enforcement agents have also reviewed recorded telephone calls made by inmates at the OBCC and the GRVC using DOC's Securus system. To use the Securus system, each inmate is assigned a personal identification number ("PIN") that must be used to access the system. Although inmates are required to use only their own PIN to make outgoing phone calls, in practice inmates frequently use other inmates' PIN to disguise the source of their calls.<sup>2</sup> Inmates also receive notice at the start of each call that their conversations using the Securus system are recorded and monitored.

## II. The Defendants

### A. *The Correction Officer*

4. PATRICK LEGERME, also known as "Panama" ("CO LEGERME"), was employed by the DOC as a correction officer from in or about July 2018 until October 2019. Between on or about December 1, 2018 and October 24, 2019, CO LEGERME was assigned to the GRVC.

### B. *The Individuals Incarcerated at the GRVC and the OBCC*

5. JAMES ALBERT, also known as "Jah" and "Jah Blize" ("INMATE ALBERT"), was incarcerated at the GRVC from on or about October 11, 2018 until July 30, 2019. He is currently incarcerated in a New York State prison while serving a sentence of

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<sup>2</sup> Included among the calls discussed herein are calls in which the inmate who is identified as a participant in the call improperly utilized another inmate's PIN to place the call. In those instances, a member of the investigative team who is familiar with each of the defendant inmate's voices from having reviewed dozens of recorded calls for each, has identified the inmate's voice.

23 years to life, imposed on or about June 12, 2019, for a violation of New York Penal Law Section 160.15 (Robbery in the First Degree).

6. JOHN MOHAMMED, also known as “Jason Mohammed,” “J-Money” and “Mullah” (“INMATE MOHAMMED”), was incarcerated at the GRVC from on or about May 9, 2019 until July 12, 2019. He is currently incarcerated in a New York State prison while serving a sentence of 3 years to 90 months, imposed on or about June 18, 2019, for a violation of New York Penal Law Section 170.30 (Possession of a Forged Instrument in the First Degree).

C. *The Intermediaries*

8. CELENA BURGESS (“BURGESS”) was a resident of Brooklyn, New York.

9. VERONICA JAGDEO (“JAGDEO”) was a resident of Freeport, New York. On November 4, 2019, she was sentenced to a term of three years’ probation in connection with a guilty plea to a violation of New York Penal Law Section 120.20 (Reckless Endangerment in the Second Degree).

10. JONATHAN MEDINA, also known as “Trigg” (“MEDINA”), was a resident of Brooklyn, New York. He is currently on New York State Parole in connection with a 2012 conviction for a violation of New York Penal Law Section 265.03 (Attempted Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree).

### III. The Contraband Conspiracy

#### A. *Bribes to Correction Officer Patrick Legerme*

11. As part of the investigation, law enforcement agents reviewed evidence relating to narcotics trafficking and the payment and receipt of bribes involving CO LEGERME.

i. Seizure of Contraband from CO LEGERME on October 24, 2019

12. On or about October 24, 2019, CO LEGERME reported to work at the GRVC, and a trained canine used by DOI staff alerted to the possible presence of narcotics on CO LEGERME's person. No contraband was found in his possession. CO LEGERME subsequently signed a written consent to permit a search of his vehicle. Agents recovered a black sock from the vehicle which contained a plastic bag containing a green leafy substance. The substance tested positive for K2 (i.e., 5-Fluoro MDMB-Pica), a Schedule I controlled substance and a synthetic cannabinoid.

13. CO LEGERME was subsequently advised of his Miranda rights and further advised that he would not suffer adverse employment consequences if he refused to answer law enforcement agents' questions. CO LEGERME agreed to waive his right to remain silent and agreed to be interviewed. CO LEGERME subsequently admitted smuggling contraband into the GRVC on multiple occasions and receiving bribes to his Cash App account for doing so.

14. In connection with the investigation, I reviewed Cash App records for CO LEGERME's account, which had the Cashtag "\$panamap19," and identified fifteen transactions totaling approximately \$11,750.00 that I believe constitute bribes paid to CO LEGERME for his role in smuggling contraband into the GRVC.

i. June Bribe and Contraband Delivery

18. On or about June 6, 2019 at approximately 8:19 p.m., INMATE ALBERT placed a Securus call to a telephone number ending in 3803 (the “3803 Number”) identified in DOC records and in subscriber records maintained by the service provider as belonging to BURGESS, whom I know to be INMATE ALBERT’s wife. During that call, INMATE ALBERT informed BURGESS that someone would “hit [her] later with a request,” which I understand to mean that someone would contact her. The following day, at approximately 10:44 a.m., INMATE ALBERT placed a call to BURGESS on the 3803 Number and asked, “Nobody um nobody hollered at you?” to which BURGESS replied, “Yea.”

19. Records obtained from Cash App reflect that on June 7, 2019, a \$1,500.00 request was made from the Cash App account controlled by CO LEGERME to the Cash App account controlled by BURGESS.<sup>3</sup> In addition, a review of CO LEGERME’s Municipal Credit Union (“MCU”) bank records corroborates what is seen upon review of the Cash App records, namely, that CO LEGERME cashed out \$1,500.00 from Cash App on June 7, 2019 and that a \$1,477.50 deposit was made into his MCU account from Cash App that same day. Additionally, after the \$1,477.50 deposit was made, CO LEGERME then withdrew \$1,420.00 in cash from his MCU bank account.

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<sup>3</sup> Personal identifying information to include name, date of birth, last four of social security number, and address information links both BURGESS and CO LEGERME to their respective Cash App accounts.

ii. July Bribe and Contraband Delivery

20. On or about July 3, 2019 at 8:05 p.m., INMATE MOHAMMED, who was incarcerated at the GRVC, placed a telephone call to a telephone number ending in 8663 (the “8663 Number”), which based on DOC records was being used by VERONICA JAGDEO<sup>4</sup>; during a separate call that same day, INMATE MOHAMMED referred to the woman on the 8663 Number as “Veronica Jagdeo.” During the 8:05 p.m. call, INMATE MOHAMMED indicated, in sum, substance and part, that JAGDEO might be receiving a call, and that if she did, MOHAMMED did not want her to answer because the person who would contact JAGDEO would want to act immediately and INMATE MOHAMMED was not ready to move forward. Based on my training and experience and the investigation, I believe that INMATE MOHAMMED was informing JAGDEO that he wanted to pay a correction officer to bring in contraband to the GRVC, but that INMATE MOHAMMED had not yet finished arranging for the contraband package to be put together and delivered to the correction officer.

21. On or about July 5, 2019 at 6:02 a.m., INMATE MOHAMMED placed a telephone call to JAGDEO on the 8663 Number. JAGDEO confirmed that “some nigga hit me up” and indicated via text message that the person was “Calling for Mulah [i.e., INMATE MOHAMMED].” JAGDEO confirmed it was somebody with a “P – Panini or some shit” and indicated that she had received the text message at approximately 3:00 a.m. JAGDEO further told INMATE MOHAMMED that when she inquired who was sending the

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<sup>4</sup> I have reviewed the service provider records for the 8663 Number, which reveal that the name and address sections of the subscriber records were left blank.

text message, she received the response “Panama.” INMATE MOHAMMED instructed JAGDEO to text back “What’s up with Friday night?”

22. Call detail records reflect that the 8663 Number and the 4797 Number were in communication approximately three times one day earlier, on July 4, 2019.<sup>5</sup> I know the 4797 Number to be CO LEGERME’s telephone number because he listed it as his number in his DOC employment records.

23. On or about July 8, 2019, INMATE MOHAMMED placed a series of telephone calls to JAGDEO at the 8663 Number.

- a. In a call at approximately 5:27 a.m., JAGDEO confirmed that she had “made 3” after which INMATE MOHAMMED inquired how the “bud” was.
- b. In a call at approximately 1:04 p.m., INMATE MOHAMMED stated “The nigga said 1 o’clock” and JAGDEO responded that “he” said “2” was acceptable. INMATE MOHAMMED asked her to make everything as small as possible. INMATE MOHAMMED and JAGDEO also discussed the appearance of the “shit” and JAGDEO informed INMATE MOHAMMED it was easy to break up, she did not require a “crusher” and that it will still get “him” [i.e., INMATE MOHAMMED] “high.” INMATE MOHAMMED subsequently indicated that the cost was “\$150” per “leaf.”
- c. In a call at approximately 1:29 p.m., INMATE MOHAMMED, called JAGDEO using a different inmate’s PIN. INMATE MOHAMMED inquired about the size of the “package” and instructed JAGDEO to inform “Panini” that once “that shit” “touchdown,” “he” will get his “spread.”
- d. In a call with INMATE MOHAMMED at approximately 4:29 p.m., JAGDEO confirmed that she “gave it to son” and “did the drop.” JAGDEO also informed INMATE MOHAMMED that

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<sup>5</sup> Call detail records for the 8663 Number and the 4797 Number both reflect two telephone calls between the numbers that day; however, only the 4797 Number records reflect the third contact.

“he” texted her about money and that she told “him” in person that when INMATE MOHAMMED received “the drop,” “he” would receive the money. JAGDEO further indicated, after “he” stated that he expected to receive half at the meeting and half after the drop, that she had told him that it was her fault and that she would send all of “it” to him via Cash App. JAGDEO also confirmed that she had “nigga’s” Cash App and that it was the same as his name, which she recalled as “Panera.” When asked by INMATE MOHAMMED what kind of car he [i.e., the person to whom she made the drop] had, JAGDEO responded by saying that it was a “Camaro” with a “drop top.”

Based on my training and experience and the investigation to date, I believe INMATE MOHAMMED and JAGDEO were discussing smuggling marijuana (“bud”) into the GRVC and that the references to “he,” “Panini” and “Panama,” were to CO LEGERME. I believe that the reference to “that shit” and “touchdown” reflect INMATE MOHAMMED instructing JAGDEO to tell CO LEGERME that CO LEGERME would be paid when the contraband marijuana was received. I further believe that JAGDEO met with CO LEGERME and provided him with contraband (the “drop”) and that she told him that she would send him the funds via Cash App. I further believe her reference to “Panera” was a mistaken reference to CO LEGERME’s Cash App Cashtag “\$panamap19.” In addition, New York State Department of Motor Vehicle records indicate that a Camaro is registered to CO LEGERME.

24. While reviewing surveillance video inside the GRVC housing area 10B on July 9, 2019 between approximately 4:18pm – 4:51pm, I observed CO LEGERME and INMATE MOHAMMED enter an area with the door marked “Janitor’s Closet” both separately and together on multiple occasions. Based on my discussions with DOC staff, I understand that the “Janitor’s Closet” is not under video surveillance and it is therefore standard practice for a DOC staff member to avoid being in an enclosed space, to include a

Janitor's Closet, with an inmate repeatedly and for an extended period as it may give rise to allegations of staff misconduct.

25. Later that same day, during a telephone call over the Securus system at approximately 7:05 p.m., I believe that INMATE MOHAMMED confirmed to JAGDEO that he had received the contraband: "You hear me though? Good looking. Give me kisses for Panini bread." JAGDEO responded, "Okay, good, good, good."

26. Records obtained from Cash App reflect that on July 17, 2019, the Cash App account used by CO LEGERME received a \$1,000.00 transfer from a sender who is listed as INMATE MOHAMMED's "sibling" on DOC visitor records. A review of bank records for an account held in CO LEGERME's name shows a \$985 deposit into the account from Cash App, \$800 of which was then withdrawn from the account that same day.

B. *Bribes to Correction Officer Jane Doe*

i. Interview of Correction Officer Jane Doe

27. On or about September 5, 2019, a correction officer whose identity is known to the affiant ("CO JANE DOE") voluntarily participated in an interview with law enforcement agents in Brooklyn, New York during which she admitted to having received payments to her Cash App account for smuggling contraband into the GRVC on numerous occasions.

ii. First March 2019 Bribe and Contraband Delivery

28. On February 19, 2019, at approximately 4:11 p.m., a GRVC inmate whose identity is known to the affiant ("GRVC Inmate 1") called [REDACTED] from a Securus recorded line at a number subscribed to by [REDACTED] ending in 0423 (the "0423 Number"). As set forth below, I believe that in this call the men discussed GRVC Inmate 1's interest in

having [REDACTED] supply him with marijuana that GRVC Inmate 1 would share with "Jah Blize" [i.e., INMATE ALBERT]:

INMATE 1: I'm trying to get, um, four Oakland Raider jerseys. Niggas got Pink Panties on the line right now, you heard?

[REDACTED]  
Oh word?

INMATE 1: Gangsta. You just gotta make it to the Jungle to drop it off to them and, more or less, we lit from there.

[REDACTED]  
...whatchu mean, like, we lit from there? Like, it's yours?  
That's yours, or...?

INMATE 1: Um, between me and the Blackwall, um, Jah Blize.  
[REDACTED]  
That's it?

INMATE 1: That's it. But you already know, Whopty in my whip so he good, and the Iceys – you already know how I do, every time I get here I make sure the Iceys is good.

GRVC Inmate 1 then provided [REDACTED] with a telephone number ending in 0311, which he identified as belonging to "Trigg" [i.e., MEDINA] (the "0311 Number").<sup>6</sup> I am aware that DOC's Gang Intelligence Unit has intercepted messages from incarcerated gang members that identify specific coded terms used by Bloods gang members. The seized paperwork provided explanations of code words including, among others, "Oakland Raiders = weed" and "Pink Panties = police." Based on my training and experience and the investigation to date, I believe that GRVC Inmate 1 was seeking to get marijuana ("4 Oakland Raider jerseys") from [REDACTED] and indicating that they had a correction officer ("Pink Panties") who could facilitate bringing the drugs into the GRVC. I further believe that GRVC Inmate 1 was asking [REDACTED] to bring the marijuana to Brooklyn (the "Jungle") to deliver it to

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<sup>6</sup> I am aware that the 0311 Number belongs to MEDINA because, among other reasons, a review of New York State Department of Correction and Community Supervision records reveals that the telephone number was listed on another inmate's call list as being registered to "John Medina" at an address that was one digit off of the address I know to have belonged to MEDINA. I am also aware that MEDINA identified himself as "Trigg" in a call to another inmate that was made over the Securus system.

MEDINA, whose telephone number he provided as belonging to the person to whom the marijuana should be delivered. I further believe that the use of the term “Jah Blize” was a reference to the nickname for INMATE ALBERT.

29. Later that same day, at approximately, 4:31 p.m., INMATE ALBERT used the Securus system to call MEDINA on the 0311 Number:

ALBERT: Yo, listen. Somebody going to be – somebody going to be hoffing at you sometime soon.  
MEDINA: Today?  
ALBERT: I don’t know if it’s going to be today, but they gonna drop something off on you.  
MEDINA: Alright.

30. Based on my training and experience and the investigation to date, I believe this call reflects INMATE ALBERT informing MEDINA that someone—whom I believe to be [REDACTED] based on the earlier call—would be contacting him to provide MEDINA illegal drugs in the near future (“they gonna drop something off on you”).

31. Several days later, on March 3, 2019, INMATE ALBERT spoke to [REDACTED] on the 0423 Number and expressed frustration that MEDINA was unreliable. [REDACTED] informed INMATE ALBERT that [REDACTED] was ready to provide contraband, which I believe was marijuana because he referred to it as “Oakland Raiders.” INMATE ALBERT told [REDACTED] that his “bitch” [i.e., CO JANE DOE] lives in Queens. I am aware that, according to DOC records, CO JANE DOE resided in Queens at this time. INMATE ALBERT provided [REDACTED] with a telephone number for CO JANE DOE (the “CO JANE DOE Number”) and instructed [REDACTED] to text the number and say “Jah said to call you instead for the clothes...actually for her to come pick up the gear, cause you got my clothes...” INMATE ALBERT instructed [REDACTED] to tell “her” [i.e., CO JANE DOE]

that "he" [REDACTED] is already in Queens. During the call, [REDACTED] told INMATE ALBERT that "that person" [i.e., CO JANE DOE] texted back and said "Yeah what's up, give me a minute."

32. I believe that [REDACTED] met with CO JANE DOE on March 3, 2019 based on the following. On that day, [REDACTED] confirmed during telephone calls with INMATE ALBERT and another GRVC inmate whose identity is known to the affiant ("GRVC Inmate 2") that "everything is solidified" and that "everything 110" and told INMATE ALBERT that he [REDACTED] saw his "wife" [i.e., CO JANE DOE].

[REDACTED] further told GRVC Inmate 2 to make sure he "grabs a ticket" when the "Oakland Raider tickets" [i.e., marijuana] "touchdown."

33. A review of records obtained from Cash App for the accounts belonging to BURGESS and [REDACTED]<sup>7</sup> for a period beginning on February 1, 2019 reveals that the first activity on each account occurred on March 4, 2019 when both users received payments from third party accounts, along with notes indicating that the payments were made on behalf of GRVC inmates. As a result, I believe that the payments received by BURGESS and [REDACTED] were proceeds from the sale of contraband by INMATE ALBERT and GRVC Inmate 2 in the GRVC.

34. On the evening of March 4, 2019, at approximately 7:48 p.m., INMATE ALBERT spoke to MEDINA and informed him that because ALBERT could not get in touch with MEDINA, he had made alternative arrangements for the delivery of the

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<sup>7</sup> Personal identifying information to include name, date of birth, last four of social security number, and address information links [REDACTED] to his Cash App account.

contraband. (“I took care of that already” and “if you had answered the phone, I would have been able to tell you what was going on”).

iii. Second March 2019 Bribe and Contraband Delivery

35. On March 17, 2019, INMATE ALBERT spoke to [REDACTED] on the 0423 Number and asked [REDACTED] if [REDACTED] still had “that number” to which [REDACTED] confirmed that he did and it was a number with the same area code as the CO JANE DOE Number. Based on the investigation to date, I believe that [REDACTED] was confirming that he still possessed the telephone number to contact CO JANE DOE.

36. On Monday, March 18, 2019 and Wednesday, March 20, 2019, [REDACTED] spoke with GRVC Inmate 2 and INMATE ALBERT and communicated, in sum, substance and part, that a delivery would be coming in the near future (“Wednesday, everything lit”) and (Everything in a minute, you heard?”).

37. Call detail records reflect a call between the 0423 Number and the CO JANE DOE Number on March 20, 2019.

38. On March 21, 2019, INMATE ALBERT contacted [REDACTED] on the 0423 Number and informed [REDACTED], in sum, substance and part, that INMATE ALBERT was “still waiting” on the delivery.

39. While reviewing surveillance video inside the GRVC housing area 7B on March 22, 2019 between approximately 06:00am – 06:55am, I observed CO JANE DOE enter the housing area and converse with INMATE ALBERT at the front of the housing area, near the correction officer’s station. Shortly after, I observed INMATE ALBERT enter his cell. I then observed CO JANE DOE walk to INMATE ALBERT’s cell and converse with him. A few minutes later, CO JANE DOE leaned into the open doorway of INMATE

ALBERT's cell (outside of the view of the surveillance cameras) and then returned to the front of the housing area.

40. Based on my discussions with DOC staff, I am aware that even though CO JANE DOE was assigned to the GRVC on that date, she was not assigned to work in GRVC housing area 7B where INMATE ALBERT's cell was located. I am further informed by DOC staff that, based on her assignment on that day, her job responsibilities would not have required her to interact with INMATE ALBERT or visit housing area 7B.

41. Later that same day, during a call between INMATE ALBERT and [REDACTED] on the 0423 Number, INMATE ALBERT informed [REDACTED] that he [i.e., [REDACTED]] "forgot something very important," which, I believe reveals that INMATE ALBERT had received a package, but that the package did not contain an item or items that INMATE ALBERT had expected to be included.

42. Records obtained from Cash App reflect that on or about March 26, 2019, CO JANE DOE<sup>8</sup> received a \$1,000.00 payment from BURGESS's Cash App account. Furthermore, between March 21 and March 30, 2019, a review of Cash App records for the accounts controlled by BURGESS and [REDACTED] show that, following confirmation of the March 22, 2019 delivery, both users received payments from third party accounts, along with notes indicating that the payments were made on behalf of GRVC inmates. I believe that most of the payments received by BURGESS and [REDACTED] through Cash App were proceeds of the contraband sold by INMATE ALBERT and GRVC Inmate 2 in GRVC.

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<sup>8</sup> Personal identifying information to include name, date of birth, last four of social security number, and address information links CO JANE DOE to her Cash App account.

iv. April 2019 Bribe and Contraband Delivery

43. On April 4, 2019, INMATE ALBERT contacted [REDACTED] on the 0423 Number and asked “Did you see my bitch on Tuesday?” [REDACTED] responded “Nah, that’s what I’m saying – you didn’t tell your wife to hit me” and asked INMATE ALBERT to make sure “wifey” knows about the new “9X,” which I understand to be a reference to his new telephone number. INMATE ALBERT instructed [REDACTED] to “just text her.” Based on my training and experience and the investigation to date, I believe INMATE ALBERT was inquiring whether [REDACTED] had contacted CO JANE DOE (“my bitch”) and that [REDACTED] informed INMATE ALBERT that CO JANE DOE had not contacted him (“you didn’t tell your wife to hit me.”)

44. Later that same day in a telephone call between [REDACTED] and INMATE ALBERT, [REDACTED] appeared to confirm that he had been in contact with CO JANE DOE, stating “Yeah, yeah, yeah” to which INMATE ALBERT replied by stating “Alright, copy.”

45. Cash App records reflect a payment of \$1,000.00 from BURGESS to CO JANE DOE on April 4, 2019.

46. While reviewing surveillance video inside the GRVC housing area 7B from April 5, 2019 between approximately 6:35am – 6:50pm, I observed CO JANE DOE enter the Building 7 control station. Shortly after, I observed INMATE ALBERT exit housing area 7B. I then observed CO JANE DOE hand INMATE ALBERT a bulky white item at the entrance of the Building 7 control station. INMATE ALBERT is then seen re-entering housing area 7B with the bulky white item. INMATE ALBERT then entered his cell and, shortly after, exited without the bulky white item.

47. Based on my discussions with DOC staff, I am aware that, even though CO JANE DOE was assigned to GRVC that day, her job responsibilities would not have required her to deliver any items to INMATE ALBERT.

48. A review of records obtained from Cash App for the Cash App accounts belonging to BURGESS and [REDACTED] reveals that both accounts received payments between April 4, 2019 and April 9, 2019 from third party accounts, along with notes indicating that the payments were made on behalf of GRVC inmates. I believe that most of the payments received by BURGESS and [REDACTED] through Cash App were proceeds of the contraband sold by INMATE ALBERT and GRVC Inmate 2 in GRVC.

v. Suboxone-Related Communications

49. On February 19, 2019, at approximately 11:30 a.m., INMATE ALBERT used the Securus system to call MEDINA over the 0311 Number. The following reflects relevant portions of the call:

ALBERT: I need – somebody going to call you, man and pick them – pick that up. Just have that ready.  
MEDINA: Alright. The thing I spoke to you about?  
ALBERT: Yeah. You still got 35?  
MEDINA: Uh, no.  
ALBERT: No!  
MEDINA: No, I don't got 35 no more nigga. I got 30...  
ALBERT: C'mon. You doing a lot bro. You doing a lot bro. You wildin'.  
MEDINA: Alright, I can get five more...  
ALBERT: Well get more than five then. Get more than five more then man.  
MEDINA: No, I gotta call. Son, I'm on my son's schedule. Because you know they only get them shits by how they get them shits...

50. Based on my training and experience, and the investigation to date, I believe that INMATE ALBERT was informing MEDINA that MEDINA was going to be contacted by someone who would seek to get narcotics from him ("pick that up") and that

they were discussing a quantity of suboxone strips<sup>9</sup> ("you still got 35" and "I got 30"). I believe INMATE ALBERT and MEDINA were discussing suboxone strips, as opposed to other forms of contraband, for several reasons. First, they were discussing a relatively large number of items ("35" and "30"), which is consistent with suboxone strips which are very small and thin (each strip being smaller and thinner than a strip of chewing gum, for instance). Second, during a call more than a month later on May 2, 2019 at approximately 6:01 p.m., INMATE ALBERT and MEDINA again discussed the numbers "30" and "35" but this time in a manner that made more clear that they were discussing suboxone strips:

ALBERT: I thought you had – you told me you had 30 for me bro.  
MEDINA: For what?  
ALBERT: You had 30 singles not 30 boxes, bro.  
MEDINA: Hell no, boy, you know how much. I had 35 singles for you, that I pushed you.  
ALBERT: I thought you had 30 boxes. You said 'Yo I got 30 boxes.'  
MEDINA: Hell no, boy. You know how much for 35 singles – that's 130.  
ALBERT: That's not – yo, how much is 30 boxes?  
MEDINA: It's gonna be like, let me see – that's – you talking about like 3500 or something.  
ALBERT: 3500?  
MEDINA: Yeah, they 130 a box right now and it comes 30 -35, I think 35 in it.  
ALBERT: So, if I give you 35, you'll get 30 boxes?  
MEDINA: Yeah I'll get 30 boxes. I might have to holler at my son and see if he can cover that because it's different out here in regards to how that shit come around.  
ALBERT: Alright, so find out how much he can cover. I need that.  
MEDINA: Alright, I can do that.

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<sup>9</sup> A suboxone strip is a film that dissolves when placed under the tongue, thereby releasing the opiate that it contains. Based on my training and experience, and discussion with other law enforcement agents, I am aware the suboxone strips are often smuggled into DOC facilities as contraband and sold to inmates because when ingested, the suboxone strips produce a drug-induced "high." Suboxone is a Schedule III controlled substance.

51. Based on my training and experience and the investigation to date, I believe that INMATE ALBERT and MEDINA were discussing the price of suboxone single strips (“[y]ou know how much for 35 singles – that’s 130” and “they 130 a box right now and it comes 30 -35, I think 35 in it”). My belief is partially informed by my knowledge that suboxone strips are typically packaged as 30 strips per box. A little more than a week later, on February 28, 2019, at approximately 6:03 p.m., INMATE ALBERT called MEDINA once again:

MEDINA: What’s poppin’ though? Hey yo, I reached out to your mans too. I gotta get a date to get with him, you heard?  
ALBERT: Yeah, man. I been waiting on you, bro.  
MEDINA: Nah, he hit me up the other night nigga...I got them shits on deck. That’s what I’m saying – I’m tired of walking around with them shits. So I got them in the crib – I’m bring them to work tomorrow and just tell him to meet me somewhere....

Based on my training and experience and the investigation to date, I believe that INMATE ALBERT and MEDINA were discussing contraband, and MEDINA was indicating that he was in possession of the requested items and prepared to deliver the material (“got them shits on deck”) and that he did not want to have the contraband on his person (“I’m tired of walking around with them shits”) and so that he intended to store them at his work (“I’m bring them to work tomorrow”).

52. On or about March 5, 2019, at approximately, 8:16 p.m., INMATE ALBERT called MEDINA. During the call, MEDINA told INMATE ALBERT, “I get two years for getting caught with what I got waiting on you, you know what I’m saying,” which I believe was a reference to the fact that MEDINA could be arrested and sentenced to jail time for possessing drugs. The following day, on or about March 6, 2019, at approximately, 4:26 p.m., INMATE ALBERT called MEDINA and asked “Did you speak to my man?” to which

MEDINA replied, "Yeah. Yeah, I dropped that on him last night . . . son came through to pick that up." Based on my training and experience and the investigation to date, I believe that MEDINA was confirming that he had passed the illegal drugs to INMATE ALBERT's contact the night before ("I dropped that on him last night."). Based on my review of call detail records as well as other Securus calls, I believe that MEDINA was indicating that he provided the suboxone strips to [REDACTED]

53. During an April 14, 2019 call between an unidentified GRVC inmate and MEDINA on the 0311 Number, MEDINA stated to the unidentified GRVC inmate in sum, substance and part, "Yeah, tell Jah [i.e., INMATE ALBERT] I said what up. Ask him if he got that package I sent him too. He never called me, never told me nothing."

54. On April 26, 2019, at approximately 6:11 pm., GRVC Inmate 2 spoke to [REDACTED] on the 0423 Number and told [REDACTED] that "he" [i.e., INMATE ALBERT] told him [i.e., GRVC Inmate 2] to holler at [REDACTED] to see "what's up with them orange sodas." During a subsequent call on April 27, 2019 at approximately 10:51 a.m., [REDACTED] told GRVC Inmate 2 that "the Icey" [REDACTED] "did his part" and further stated "even the other shits you asked me for – son kept asking for – yeah, even those too." [REDACTED] then asked GRVC Inmate 2 to tell "bro" [i.e. INMATE ALBERT] to call him. INMATE ALBERT then called [REDACTED] on the 0423 number a few minutes later, at approximately 11:09 a.m., and discussed what was in the package he [i.e., INMATE ALBERT] received. Based on my training and experience and the investigation to date, I believe that GRVC Inmate 2 was telling [REDACTED] that INMATE ALBERT was asking about the suboxone strips ("orange sodas"). My belief is based in part on my knowledge that suboxone strips are orange in color.

55. As previously discussed, on May 2, 2019 at approximately 6:01 p.m., during a telephone call with MEDINA, INMATE ALBERT confirmed that he had received the suboxone strips from MEDINA. Specifically, INMATE ALBERT said, "I thought you had – you told me you had 30 for me, bro. You had 30 singles, not 30 boxes, bro," to which MEDINA replied, "I had 35 singles for you, that I pushed you."

56. I am aware that approximately one week later, on or about May 11, 2019, DOC staff conducted a search of the housing area in the GRVC where INMATE ALBERT was incarcerated. During that search, DOC staff recovered 33 suboxone strips and two small packages of a substance appearing to be marijuana from the shower area.

57. On or about May 15, 2019, at approximately, 1:20 p.m., INMATE ALBERT called MEDINA to again inquire about the availability of suboxone:

ALBERT: Yo did you find out about those, from the bro?  
MEDINA: I gotta call him back. He told me to hit him back, he was gonna holler at his mans. So I gotta wait.  
ALBERT: Yeah, I'm saying – I need to know what time, like, I need to know what's going on with that...I got the baby-love on deck bro, so I need to know.  
MEDINA: [...] I'ma holler at son. So he definitely gonna wanna jump on that anyway.  
ALBERT: Alright, man. But I got a little something set to the side for you. If anything man, I'll just have you hit the wife up and go get that.

58. Based on my training and experience and the investigation to date, I believe that initially, INMATE ALBERT was asking whether MEDINA has been able to obtain suboxone strips from MEDINA's contacts ("did you find about those") and MEDINA indicated that he waiting to hear back ("So I gotta wait"). I further believe that INMATE ALBERT was indicating that he had funds ready for the purchase ("I got the baby-love on deck") and that his statement about "the wife" was a reference to his wife, BURGESS.

vi. Additional Payments

59. In the course of the investigation, I have identified four other occasions in April and May 2019 in which CO JANE DOE received \$1,000 Cash App payments from BURGESS. Based on my training and experience and the investigation to date, I believe that in each instance BURGESS made payments to CO JANE DOE, she did so to facilitate the delivery of contraband into the GRVC.

WHEREFORE, your deponent respectfully requests that arrest warrants be issued so that the defendants JAMES ALBERT, also known as “Jah” and “Jah Blize,”

██████████ CELENA BURGESS, VERONICA JAGDEO,

PATRICK LEGERME, also known as “Panama,” JONATHAN MEDINA, also known as “Trigg,” and JOHN MOHAMMED, also known as “Jason Mohammed,” “J-Money” and “Mulah,” may be dealt with according to law.

IT IS FURTHER REQUESTED that this Court file this application and the accompanying arrest warrants under seal. I believe that sealing these documents is necessary because the defendants are not aware of the investigation. Premature disclosure of the contents of this affidavit and related documents could seriously jeopardize the

investigation by giving the defendants an opportunity to flee from prosecution, destroy or tamper with evidence, change patterns of behavior, and notify confederates.

  
CHRISTOPHER KOTTMEIER  
Special Agent, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Sworn to before me this  
8<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2020  


THE HONORABLE SANKET J. BULSARA  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK