



**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**  
*Southern District of New York*

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**RIKERS INMATE ARRESTED FOR ATTEMPTING TO HIRE HITMAN  
TO MURDER HIS HALF-BROTHER**

Geoffrey S. Berman, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, John B. Devito, Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives ("ATF"), James P. O'Neill, the Commissioner of the New York City Police Department ("NYPD"), and Cynthia Brann, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Correction, announced that ANTHONY TEJADA, a/k/a "YM," an inmate at the Rikers Island correctional facility, was arrested yesterday for attempting to hire a hitman to murder his half-brother. TEJADA was presented today in Manhattan federal court before U.S. Magistrate Judge Ona T. Wang.

Manhattan U.S. Attorney Geoffrey S. Berman said: "As alleged, while incarcerated at Rikers Island, Anthony Tejada attempted to hire a hitman to murder his half-brother. Now, thanks to the dedicated work of our law enforcement partners, Tejada's alleged plan has been foiled, he faces federal charges, and his intended victim is safe."

ATF Special Agent-in-Charge John B. Devito said: "As alleged, Tejada's actions could have resulted in serious bodily harm and or the death of an innocent individual. Thanks to the efforts of the ATF/ NYPD Joint Robbery Task Force and our partners in the Department of Correction, a crime of violence was averted. ATF stands with its law enforcement partners' commitment to ridding the streets of individuals seeking to spread violence in their community. I would like to thank the United States Attorney's Office for its leadership and guidance throughout this investigation."

NYC Department of Correction Commissioner Cynthia Brann said: "This investigation and the resulting arrest, yet again sends a very clear message to those in DOC custody. You will

be prosecuted if you commit crimes in custody, and if convicted you will face prison time. I am proud of our Correction Intelligence Bureau's steadfast commitment to keeping our officers, those in our custody, and the people of New York City safe. And I want to thank our fellow law enforcement partners for working to help bring this individual to justice."

According to the allegations in the Complaint filed today in Manhattan federal court:<sup>1</sup>

On October 1, 2018, TEJADA was arrested and charged in New York State court with the attempted murder of TEJADA's half-brother ("Victim-1"). TEJADA was detained at the Rikers Island correctional facility.

While an inmate at Rikers, TEJADA hired an individual he believed to be a hitman to murder Victim-1. In fact, the person he hired to commit this murder was an undercover ATF agent. TEJADA had multiple recorded conversations with the undercover agent, both over the phone and in person, in which TEJADA discussed the intended murder, and TEJADA agreed to pay the undercover agent \$5,000 to commit the murder.

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TEJADA, 19, of Brooklyn, New York, is charged with one count of murder-for-hire, which carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison, and one count of solicitation to commit a crime of violence, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison. The maximum potential sentence in this case is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the judge.

Mr. Berman praised the outstanding work of the ATF, NYPD, and the New York City Department of Correction's Intelligence Bureau.

This case is being handled by the Office's Violent and Organized Crime Unit. Assistant United States Attorneys Frank J. Balsamello and Adam S. Hobson are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Complaint are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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<sup>1</sup> As the introductory phrase signifies, the entirety of the text of the Complaint constitutes only allegations, and every fact described herein should be treated as an allegation.