



**Rick Staly, Sheriff**  
**FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

*"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."*

---

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**Date:** March 5, 2025  
**Prepared by:** Public Affairs Office  
**Email:** [PAO@flaglersheriff.com](mailto:PAO@flaglersheriff.com)  
**Release #:** 2025 – 034

### **Cuban National Illegally in the U.S. Arrested for Human Trafficking, Set to be Deported**

BUNNELL, Fla. — The Flagler County Sheriff's Office has arrested a 70-year-old Cuban national after an investigation by the FCSO Major Case Unit determined he committed human trafficking and sexual activity with a minor. Following the arrest, detectives contacted the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to request a detainer for deportation.

On February 17, deputies made contact with a 16-year-old female, who had previously been reported missing, after she returned home. The juvenile female disclosed that she was with a homeless male named Jose in a tent behind a gas station in Palm Coast and that a sexual incident had occurred between them.

The investigation was assigned to the Major Case Unit, with Detective First Class Kathryn Gordon as the lead investigator. Upon speaking with the victim, detectives determined the Florida Department of Children and Families needed to be involved and made arrangements for an emergency forensic examination and interview with the First Coast Child Protection Team.

Through investigative means, detectives identified the male as Jose Valerio-Rodriguez, who was living behind and frequents the gas station.

Detectives obtained a search warrant for Valerio-Rodriguez's tent, as well as his DNA. On March 3, Detective First Class Gordon and Sergeant Frank Gamarra made contact with Valerio-Rodriguez and served the search warrants.

*Proudly Serving the Community Since 1917*  
*A Five Diamond Accredited Law Enforcement Agency*



Valerio-Rodriguez was arrested for Human Trafficking and Unlawful Sexual Activity with Certain Minors. He was transported to the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility, where he is being held without bond.



*Jose Valerio-Rodriguez (Flagler County Jail Mugshot)*

Valerio-Rodriguez, who is a Cuban citizen, was found to be living in the country illegally. Due to his immigration status, detectives contacted the Department of Homeland Security, who determined there was probable cause for deportation and issued an immigration detainer. A Flagler County detention deputy, who was also a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Warrant Service Officer, served the detainer on Valerio-Rodriguez. He will be transferred into DHS custody and deported by U.S. Customs and Border Protection when the local arrest is resolved through the courts.

“This predator was living in the country illegally and took advantage of a child,” said Sheriff Rick Staly. “He has earned himself not only a trip to the Green Roof Inn, but also a flight out of our country. The Sheriffs of the State of Florida stand united against criminal aliens. We pray the child victim receives the help she will need from this attack.”

###

*Proudly Serving the Community Since 1917  
A Five Diamond Accredited Law Enforcement Agency*

