

Probation for air cargo worker who stole vape juice

By Lannie Walker
lannie@postguam.com

A former ramp agent with Micronesia Air Cargo won't go to prison but will be placed under probation for a year for stealing items from the mail.

Antonio Pasion Victor Jr., 24, was sentenced yesterday. He pleaded guilty in May of stealing several items that were destined for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The items included a PlayStation 4 console,

four video games, a controller and four bottles of vape juice. The value of the items was estimated to be \$553. Victor returned all of the items except for the vape juice.

Prosecutor Stephen Leon Guerrero recommended three years of probation, a \$500 fine, and 50 hours of community service. He told District Court Chief Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood the defendant "took advantage of his position."
"The public deserves protection"

from mail theft, Leon Guerrero said.

Victor, who had no prior criminal history, said in court: "At the time, I was not thinking. I do apologize. It was my mistake. I am not this kind of person," he said.

Victor's defense attorney Cynthia Ecube said the U.S. Attorney's office was "not interested in working out a deal."

Ecube told the judge that her client made a "bad error in judgment" and "owns up to his culpability."

Police, Guard confirmation hearings scheduled

Confirmation hearings have been scheduled for Capt. Stephen Ignacio and Lt. Col. Esther Aguigui.

The Committee on Public Safety, Border Safety, Military and Veterans Affairs, Mayors' Council, Infrastructure and Public Transit will hold the confirmation hearing on April 16. The committee will accept public testimony on the governor's nomination of Ignacio to serve as the chief of the Guam Police Department and Aguigui to serve as the adjutant general of the Guam National Guard and director of the Department of Military Affairs.

Ignacio's confirmation had been postponed pending the submission of several documents. His confirmation hearing is scheduled for 3:30 p.m. on April 16. Aguigui's confirmation hearing is scheduled for 4:45 p.m. the same day.

Following the confirmation hearings, the committee will conduct a public hearing at 6 p.m. on proposed rules and regulations related to games of chance at fairs followed by testimony on Bill 42 that seeks to grant administrative jurisdiction of a two-acre parcel of land in Tamuning to the Guam Regional Transit Authority.

(Daily Post Staff)

CSC upholds Port police lieutenant's firing

By Kevin Kerrigan
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The Civil Service Commission has upheld the termination of former Port Authority of Guam police Lt. Eddie Castro.

Castro was the second highest-ranking law enforcement officer at the Port when he was fired in 2013.

Port attorney Mike Phillips said Castro was accused of using an official port vehicle to visit his girlfriend during work hours and then falsifying his time cards, claiming he was at work when he was not.

Initially, the CSC voted 5 to 1 to demote Castro to unarmed Port guard, even though Phillips argued that that position does not exist at the port.

Seeking full reinstatement and back pay, Castro took his case to the Superior Court of Guam. However, Judge Maria Cenzone denied his appeal and sent the case back to the Civil Service Commission.

Following a hearing on arguments on April 4, the commission voted 4-0 to uphold management's decision to terminate Castro.

Castro was represented by attorney William Pole, who did not return a call for comment.

When asked if the Castro case has any bearing on the ongoing "Port 7" fired workers' appeals, Phillips said, "it shows you there's good reason not to try and settle them."

The Port 7 cases should be allowed to reach a final conclusion before

anyone is reinstated, he said.

The Port 7 cases stem from an allegedly fraudulent workers' compensation claim filed more than six years ago by former Port marketing manager Bernadette Sterne Meno.

Port General Manager Rory Respicio has assigned Deputy General Manager Connie Shinohara to review the Port 7 cases and at least six additional cases involving the termination of Port employees under the prior administration.

No settlement offers have been made to any of the Port 7 employees, however, attorney Curtis Vandeveld, who represents two of the Port 7, said the Port "invited settlement offers" in January.

Delegate proposes amendment for timely tax refunds

By Kevin Kerrigan
kevin@postguam.com

Guam Del. Michael San Nicolas plans to introduce an amendment to the Organic Act of Guam that would require that the government of Guam set aside funds in the tax refund account. The amendment would

ensure that "tax refund payments are more timely," he said.

San Nicolas said the set-aside would also prevent GovGuam from increased deficit spending.

San Nicolas wrote to Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero praising the commitment she made to include a \$125 million set-aside for tax refunds in her 2020

budget proposal submitted Monday to the Legislature.

San Nicolas wrote that tax refund set-asides have "been a matter of public law for many years," although rarely followed.

The congressman said adding an amendment to the Organic Act would be enforceable by the District Court

of Guam.

Additionally, he said an Organic Act amendment supersedes the "separation of powers" argument made by past administrations that maintained the local law requiring the tax refund set-aside is unenforceable "by the local courts as a result of the separation of powers clause."

San Nicolas wrote that the governor's "commitment to make these deposits within the first full fiscal year" of her administration "is commendable."

The congressman asked for the governor's support to "enshrine this practice into the Organic Act."

San Nicolas stated he intends to introduce the amendment to the Organic Act by next month.

To date, the Leon Guerrero administration has not paid any tax refunds for the 2018 tax year.

Committee on Health, Tourism, Historic Preservation, Land and Justice

SENATOR THERESE M. TERLAJE
Tiniantertal Singkroha Iilhehasturan Guåhan
35th Guam Legislature

PUBLIC HEARING • 11:30 a.m. • Wednesday, April 17, 2019
Guam Legislature Public Hearing Room, Guam Congress Building, Hagåtña

AGENDA:

- Confirmation Hearing for Paul S. N. Shimizu to serve as a Member of Guam Visitors Bureau
- Status update from Guam Visitors Bureau on maintenance of parks and visitor safety

If you require any special accommodations or for further information please contact the Office of Senator Therese M. Terlaje at 472-3386. Testimonies may be submitted to our office at Asia Plaza Center, Suite 207, 173 Aspranal Avenue, Hagåtña, Guam 96910, to the Guam Congress Building, or via email at senator@terlaje.com. The hearing will be broadcast on local television, GMA Channel 21, Docomo Channel 111.60.4 and stream online via Iilhehasturan Guåhan's live feed at http://www.guamlegislature.com/live_feed.htm. This ad is paid for with government funds.

GUAM BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR DENTISTRY

Regular Meeting
Wednesday, April 17,
2019 at 3:00 PM

at the Terlaje Professional Building, 194 Hernan Cortez Avenue, 2nd Floor, Suite 209 Health Professional Licensing Office Board Conference Room, Hagåtña, Guam.

For more information, please contact the Board office at 735-7405 thru 12. Persons with disabilities needing special accommodations may call 735-7172 or the telecommunication device for the Hearing/Speech Impaired (TDD) at 649-1801. Executive meeting may be called if necessary.

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Cancer treatment made from stem cells

SAN DIEGO (Tribune News Service) — A new form of cancer immunotherapy has been given to a University of California, San Diego Health patient in the first test of immune cells grown from stem cells.

The patient, Derek Ruff, is being treated for stage 4 colon cancer, which recurred after a decade in remission. The disease continued to progress despite chemotherapy and radiation, said UCSD's Dr. Sandip Patel, who treated Ruff.

Ruff is getting infusions of what are called "natural killer" or NK cells, made by San Diego's Fate Therapeutics. Fate has worked closely with UCSD's Dr. Dan Kaufman, an expert on these cells.

Ruff began getting multiple doses of NK cells in February. In early April, he said the immunotherapy hasn't debilitated him like previous treatments.

"Before I got the first treatment, I was very apprehensive," said Ruff, 52. "I had been through a lot of chemo, and chemo makes you feel really bad."

It has yet to be determined if the NK cell treatment, called FT500, is working.

Fate is testing these NK cells in patients with advanced solid tumors, where a better-known cell therapy called chimeric antigen receptor, or

CAR T cells, has shown limited benefit.

CAR T cells are genetically engineered to detect a specific molecular marker on the cancer cells. These cells have revolutionized cancer treatment, especially for blood cancers. Two approved treatments are available, Kymriah and Yescarta.

But the CAR T cells must be custom-made from the patient's own cells, an expensive process that takes weeks. And they haven't been extensively tested against solid tumors, such as Ruff's.

Patel said he was particularly excited by the idea of treating solid tumors with NK cell therapies.

"Patients with solid tumors are the biggest population of patients that we see in aggregate, and are a major unmet need in terms of cellular immunotherapy," Patel said.

FT500 is a first-of-its-kind product approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for experimental use.

Unlike CAR T cells, which are custom-made from a patient's own cells over a period of weeks, FT500 is produced in advance as an "off-the-shelf" treatment and doesn't require immune matching. Due to economies of scale, "off-the-shelf" treatments are expected to cost less.

April 23 deadline set for Trump tax returns

WASHINGTON (Tribune News Service) — House Ways and Means Chairman Richard Neal is giving the IRS an extension until 5 p.m. April 23 to produce the six years of President Donald Trump's tax returns he requested earlier this month.

The Massachusetts Democrat told IRS Commissioner Charles Rettig in a letter Saturday that the agency has failed to produce the tax returns despite an "unambiguous legal obligation to do so" under Section 6103 of the tax code. If Rettig declines to turn over the records by the new deadline, Neal wrote that "your failure will be interpreted as a denial of my request."

Neal's initial deadline for Rettig was April 10. But Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin wrote to Neal that the agency could not comply at that time and that he would be discussing the matter further with Justice Department counsel.

Mnuchin wrote that the request was politically motivated and didn't have an underlying public

policy objective.

Trump had telegraphed his Treasury secretary's move Wednesday, telling reporters he wouldn't release his tax returns since he's still under audit.

Neal has asserted his right under the Internal Revenue Code to ask for any tax return from the IRS. Section 6103 of that code states that the agency "shall furnish" any return requested by either the House Ways and Means or Senate Finance chairmen.

Democrats contend that a 1982 Treasury order delegated the responsibility for complying with Section 6103 to the IRS commissioner, and that the tax laws also stipulate if Treasury wants to take that power back, it must first provide 30 days' notice to lawmakers.

The powers given the tax-writing committee chairmen stem from a 1924 law that had its origin in conflict of interest and bribery allegations against administration figures and those the administration did business with at the time.



**Serve Guam Commission
Office of the Governor
(Overseas AmeriCorps Programs in Guam)**

NOTICE OF MEETING

The Serve Guam Commission (SGC) will convene its regular Board meeting on **Wednesday, April 17, 2019, at 11:30a.m. - 1:00p.m.** At GCIC Bldg, Suite 205, 2nd floor, Hagåtña Guam

For additional information, please contact Tiffany San Nicolas, SGC Administrative Assistant at 300-4599 or tiffany.sannicolas@sgc.guam.gov


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