



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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Media Release

From: Denise M. Moloney
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Re: Arrest Made in Commercial Burglary – 2023-23351

Date: August 2, 2023

On 07-20-23, detectives began investigating a Commercial Burglary that occurred at Crumbl Cookie, located at 7069 Coastal Boulevard in Brooksville.

Evidence gathered from the scene indicated the suspect entered the business through a side door and proceeded directly to the safe then to the cash register, removing cash from both.

The suspect was described to be wearing a black sweatshirt, black pants, and red Crocs. The suspect was observed to be carrying a brown and black backpack and had a black mask on his face.

Detectives spoke with the manager of the business who advised the suspect was possibly Jacob Ortega, a former employee. The manager went on to advise that while working at Crumbl, Ortega always wore red Crocs and carried a brown and black backpack.

Video footage was collected from surrounding businesses. The footage showed a vehicle in the immediate area at the time of the burglary. Detectives believed the suspect may have been operating, or a passenger in, the vehicle.

On 08-01-23, detectives made contact with the owner of the vehicle at his residence. The owner told detectives he received a call from Ortega around 2 a.m. on 07-20-23, requesting a ride to the Coastal Plaza (where Crumbl Cookie is located) so he could make a drug deal. The vehicle owner dropped Ortega off at the plaza and later picked him up near the Home Goods store.

The vehicle owner told detectives that several days later, Ortega told him that he (Ortega) had obtained money from Crumbl Cookie. The vehicle owner also told detectives that Ortega placed some of the money inside the vehicle to "hold on to."

With permission from the owner, detectives checked the vehicle to find a sum of cash in the glove compartment. The cash was taken as evidence.

Later on 08-01-23, detectives made contact with Ortega.

During an interview with detectives, Ortega admitted to his involvement in the burglary. Ortega stated he still had codes to the door, safe, and register from when he was employed there, and used same to gain access to the business and subsequently to the cash.

After committing the burglary, Ortega met up with his friend, near Home Goods, and was taken back to his residence.

Ortega told detectives he spent most of the money on food and alcohol for himself and his friends and that the rest of it was stored in his friend's vehicle.

Due to Ortega's confession, along with the physical evidence collected by detectives, **Jacob Ortega DOB/12-28-2004** was placed under arrest, and charged as follows:

- Burglary Structure (w/a mask enhancer)
- Grand Theft
- Unlawful Use of Two-Way Communication Device
- Bond - \$12,000.

The investigation continues.

Hernando County Crime Stoppers / Anonymous Tips

If you have information on this case, please contact Hernando County Crime Stoppers. You will remain anonymous!

Hernando County Crime Stoppers can be reached by phone at 1-866-990-TIPS (8477) or **TIPS from a cell phone.

You may also submit your tip via the internet at <http://www.hernandocountycrimestoppers.com> .

You will remain anonymous and also be eligible for a reward up to \$5,000 cash!

The Office of Sheriff:

The Office of the Sheriff is established by the Florida Constitution. As a constitutional officer, the Sheriff has the exclusive authority to administer his or her agency and is responsible for preserving the peace throughout the entire county, carrying out the laws of the state, the orders of Florida courts, and the ordinances of the Board of County Commissioners. The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement and correctional officer of the county.

Sheriff Al Nienhuis was initially appointed as the Sheriff of Hernando County by the Governor in January of 2011. He was then elected by the people of Hernando County in 2012, ran unopposed in 2016, and was re-elected in 2020. Sheriff Nienhuis remains accountable to the people of Hernando County.