

PRESS RELEASE

Six Charged in Large Scale Marriage Fraud Ring

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For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts

For over a decade, alleged leader earned millions, arranging sham marriages between illegal aliens and U.S. citizens in Massachusetts; defendant bragged about Massachusetts being a “sanctuary”

BOSTON – Six individuals in Massachusetts have been charged with allegedly arranging sham marriages to fraudulently obtain immigration status for illegal aliens. The organization’s leader has allegedly been orchestrating sham marriages for illegal aliens to enable them to fraudulently obtain immigration status for over 10 years and has made millions of dollars doing so.

The following individuals [have been charged](#) with conspiracy to harbor illegal aliens; harboring illegal aliens; conspiracy to commit marriage fraud; and marriage fraud:

1. Jennifer Gonzalez, 43, of Fall River, Mass.;
2. Erica Daniels, 29, of Fall River, Mass.;
3. Chreise Alejandro, 39, of Fall River, Mass.;
4. Amara Pugh, 31, of Fall River, Mass.;
5. Jessica Tavares, 31, of Attleboro, Mass.; and
6. Jaylin Hill, 26, of Fall River, Mass.

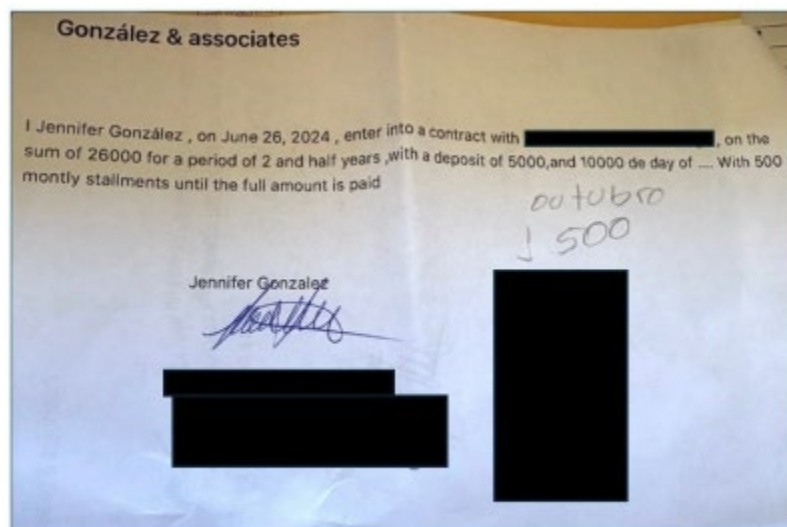
Gonzalez, Daniels, Alejandro, Pugh and Tavares were arrested this morning. Hill is currently serving a state prison sentence for a firearms offense. Initial appearances are scheduled for today as follows: Hill at 12:45 p.m.; Daniels and Pugh at 2 p.m.; Alejandro and Tavares at 2:45 p.m.; and Gonzalez at 3:15 p.m.

According to [court documents](#), Gonzalez ran a business in which illegal aliens paid her to arrange sham marriages for them so that they could fraudulently obtain immigration status. Gonzalez in turn paid Daniels, Alejandro, Tavares and Hill (all U.S. citizens), to engage in one or more marriages to illegal aliens so that those “customers” could

submit fraudulent documents to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to obtain legal immigration status. Pugh, also a U.S. citizen, worked as the business's "secretary."

Gonzalez's operation allegedly averages approximately 18 to 20 illegal marriages per year, typically charging between \$38,000 to \$40,000 per sham marriage. It is alleged that Gonzalez has earned hundreds of thousands of dollars per year over at least the last 10 years.

During the investigation, Gonzalez allegedly stated that she uses the proceeds of the marriage fraud scheme to buy businesses and real estate in the Dominican Republic. It is alleged that Gonzalez instructed her illegal alien customers about how to establish the appearance of a legitimate marriage, including setting up life insurance policies and joint bank accounts and taking selfie-style pictures as a married couple. Gonzalez allegedly told her illegal alien customers that it would take three to four months to prepare sufficient documentation of the sham marriage to use to apply for immigration status and required her customers to sign "contracts" to pay for her services.



One of GONZALEZ'S customers' contracts.

According to court documents, Gonzalez was captured on video and audio recordings during the investigation directing the printing and signing of a disguised "loan" contract and accepting a \$3,000 cash down payment for arranging a sham marriage. Gonzalez allegedly told the customer that the contract intentionally avoided mentioning the spouse because doing so would be "incriminating," and that she designed the documents to conceal the fraudulent purpose. It is further alleged that customers commonly made ongoing \$500 monthly payments to their assigned "spouse" or someone close to the spouse as part of maintaining the sham marriage.

Gonzalez also allegedly paid Alejandro, Tavares and Hill to enter into sham marriages with illegal alien customers. The defendants took photographs of the “weddings” and social outings with their sham spouses to use in fraudulently applying for immigration status.



TAVARES allegedly entering into a sham marriage with an illegal alien from Brazil in May 2018



DANIELS allegedly entering into a sham marriage with an illegal alien from Brazil in August 2024

Gonzalez is also captured on video and audio recordings explaining that she allegedly invested her earnings on real estate and business investments in the Dominican Republic, which she repeatedly referred to as “her country.”

Below are excerpts from video and audio recordings allegedly between Gonzalez and a cooperating witness:

- *“But also that’s when Trump was becoming a president . . . , and there was a lot of immigration powers under the new administration, immigration laws/proceedings are stricter,” “....we’re in a new government, things are a little bit more difficult....”*

- *"...I believe that you you can okay, because this state is a sanctuary, like Trump doesn't like this state because the government from here, the state defends us very much."*
- *"Massachusetts is the best place for you to be. That is a fact."*
- *"You get health insurance. Um, you get a lot of help as an immigrant here."*

According to court documents, multiple defendants lied on Massachusetts SNAP benefit applications by falsely claiming to have never been married, even while filing federal immigration petitions on behalf of their sham spouses. Gonzalez allegedly spent over \$120,000 that she received in SNAP benefits while she was running the sham marriage ring and buying property in the Dominican Republic.

This is an ongoing investigation.

The charges of harboring illegal aliens and conspiracy to do the same, each provide for a sentence of up to 10 years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. The charges of marriage fraud and conspiracy to do the same each provide for a sentence of up to five years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

United States Attorney Leah B. Foley; Jeffrey Grimming, Acting Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in New England; and Shawn Saucier, Northeast Regional Chief of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by the Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Office of Inspector General, Northeast Region; the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Inspector General; and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service's Boston Division. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Michael Crowley and Kaitlin J. Brown of the Organized Crime & Gang Unit are prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging document are allegations. The defendants are presumed to be innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in the court of law.

Updated October 21, 2026