



PRESS RELEASE

## Former Southwest Key employee arrested for sexual contact with unaccompanied minors aboard airplane

Thursday, April 20, 2023

### For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Texas

McALLEN, Texas – A 61-year-old Harlingen resident, and former Southwest Key employee, has been charged with multiple counts of sexual contact with a ward, announced U.S. Attorney Alamdar S. Hamdani.

Authorities arrested Rodolfo Alanis today. He is expected to make his initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge J. Scott Hacker tomorrow at 9 a.m.

A federal grand jury returned the three-count indictment April 18, which was unsealed upon his arrest.

“The migrant children in these facilities are the most vulnerable; they are alone and often do not speak the language,” said Hamdani. “We have to entrust them to the care of others while there and as they are transported from point A to point B. As such, my office will seek to hold those accountable who allegedly violate that trust. These allegations are serious and we will follow the case to its end to ensure justice is served overall, but especially on behalf of any potential young victim.”

According to the charges, Alanis was a youth care worker at Southwest Key in both McAllen and Brownsville. Southwest Key operates several facilities that temporarily house immigrant children. They have facilities in McAllen and Brownsville.

Alanis allegedly engaged in sexual contact with three minor children who, at the time, were detained and under the custody and authority of Alanis. The indictment further alleges the sexual contact occurred on three separate occasions while on board an airplane.

If convicted, Alanis faces up to two years imprisonment on each count.

FBI and Department of Health and Human Services - Office of Inspector General and Immigration and Customs Enforcement conducted the investigation with the assistance of Department of Homeland Security-Office of Inspector General. Assistant U.S. Attorney Laura Garcia and Alexa Parcell are prosecuting the case.

An indictment is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence. A defendant is presumed innocent unless convicted through due process of law.

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