



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

TEXAS JUVENILE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

PUBLIC INFORMATION ARREST SUMMARY

On July 15, 2024, inspectors general with the Office of Inspector General (OIG) at the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) with the assistance of U.S. Marshals arrested former Texas Juvenile Justice Department Juvenile Correctional Officer (JCO) Gerardo Puente, 27, on two counts of indecency with a child by exposure and one count of indecency with a child by contact. The alleged exposure offenses are a 3rd degree felony under the Texas Penal Code Chapter 21.11, punishable by a fine of up to \$10,000 and confinement in jail for a period of up to 10 years. The alleged contact offense is a 2nd degree felony under the Texas Penal Code Chapter 21.11, punishable by a fine of up to \$10,000 and confinement in jail for a period of up to 20 years. This case is being prosecuted by the Special Prosecution Unit.

This arrest emanated from an investigation initiated in June 2024 by the OIG of incidents which occurred in May and June 2024 against a juvenile victim committed to TJJD. While working as a JCO at the Evins Regional Juvenile Center, Puente is alleged to have reached over and touched the genitals of the victim. Additionally, on two separate incidents, the victim exposed their genitals to Puente at Puente's request.

The Office of Inspector General is the independent law enforcement agency that is statutorily responsible for investigating criminal allegations involving TJJD juveniles, TJJD employees, TJJD facilities, contractors, or programs of the Texas juvenile justice system. Anyone can report allegations of misconduct to the Incident Reporting Center by emailing a complaint to TJJD.IRC@tjjd.texas.gov, or by calling a 24-hour-a-day toll free hotline 1-866-477-8354. Historical TJJD incident data can be found on the [Open Data Portal of Texas.gov](https://www.open.texas.gov/).



Hidalgo Co. Jail Booking Photograph