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RAW VIDEO: Rey Guerra Leaving Court



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By **Victor Castillo**
 Thursday, August 27, 2009 at 3:49 p.m.

Action 4 News has posted RAW VIDEO of former Starr County Sheriff Reymundo Guerra and his attorney Philip Hilder.



Photo: 1 of 3 [See Larger Images](#)

Guerra walked out of the Federal Courthouse in McAllen after being sentenced to five years and four months in prison.

Philip H. Hilder, Guerra's defense attorney, says Guerra accepted his responsibility and accepted the fact that he crossed the line and he is prepared to pay the price for that.

"I think things went extremely well," Hilder told Action 4 News. "The sheriff is satisfied with the sentence given by the court and I'm satisfied as well that justice has been done."

The sentence comes after the 52-year old lawman pleaded guilty back in May to conspiring to possess with intent to distribute controlled substances.

During sentencing, U.S. District Judge Randy Crane said that, "Corruption needs to be weeded out of this community."

But the judge also took into consideration that Guerra plead guilty early in the case and cooperated with federal investigators to arrest others involved in criminal activity.

"It helped in the sentencing because he was given a reduction of the time allocated by the court because of cooperation," Hilder emphasized.

Court documents indicate Guerra admitted that since at least January of 2007 he utilized information learned as a result of his position as Sheriff to enable Jose Carlos Hinojosa and his drug trafficking associates to avoid investigation and possible arrest, and to accelerate their release if they were arrested.

"Initially Sheriff Guerra thought that Mr. Hinojosa was with Mexican law enforcement and he had been with Mexican law enforcement," Hilder said. "It's just very unclear as to when it was determined that he was no longer with, when Hinojosa was no longer with law enforcement."

On at least on one occasion, prosecutors said Guerra knowingly gave a false document to investigators to deflect suspicion from one of Hinojosa's associates.

Guerra also assisted Hinojosa to learn of information leading to searches of stash houses and seizures of controlled substances.

"Even though he had a high profile, he had a very minor role, most minor role in the alleged conspiracy," Hilder told Action 4 News.

In return for his information and protection, Guerra was compensated through "gifts" from Hinojosa, typically \$2,000 to \$3,000 dollars at a time.

Guerra's family walks out the courthouse knowing he has until the end of September to self surrender and begin serving his time in prison.

"The family is pleased and relieved that, pleased at the result and relieved that the matter is concluded," he said.

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