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Florida Woman Convicted of Smuggling Marijuana Into St. Thomas Through Cyril E. King Airport

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ST. THOMAS — United States Attorney Gretchen C.F. Shappert for the District of the Virgin Islands announced Thursday that Raquel Rivera was convicted at trial Wednesday after smuggling marijuana into St. Thomas. Rivera will be sentenced at a later date.

According to evidence presented at trial, Rivera was stopped on April 22, 2020 at the Cyril E. King airport after arriving on St. Thomas from Miami, FL. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers then searched the luggage she was carrying, including one suitcase checked in Rivera's name and one checked in the name of someone else.

Inside, officers found 12 identical, vacuum-sealed bags of marijuana concealed in various items of clothing, including jeans, towels, and a Hello Kitty blanket. In total, Rivera had nearly six

kilograms of marijuana in both suitcases, and when interviewed by officers that day she gave conflicting accounts of what was in the suitcases and who packed them.

This case is being investigated by the Department of Homeland Security-Homeland Security Investigations and CBP. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Natasha Baker and Nathan Brooks, and is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) investigation.

OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level drug traffickers, money launderers, gangs, and transnational criminal organizations that threaten the United States by using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach that leverages the strengths of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies against criminal networks.