

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
District of Massachusetts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, October 4, 2022

Woburn Restaurant Owners Arrested and Charged with Human Smuggling

BOSTON – A father and son who own and operate two Woburn restaurants, Taste of Brazil—Tudo No Brasa and The Dog House, were arrested today and charged with human smuggling.

Jesse James Moraes, 64, and Hugo Giovanni Moraes, 42, both of Woburn, were charged with conspiring to encourage and induce an alien to come to, enter, and reside in the United States for the purpose of commercial advantage or private financial gain, knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact that such coming to, entry, and residence is or will be in violation of law. Marcos Chacon, 29, also of Woburn, was charged with knowing transfer of a false identification document knowing that such document was produced without lawful authority, and with illegal reentry by a deported alien. The word “alien” is used in this release because it is the language utilized in the statute(s) these individuals are alleged to have violated.

Following an initial appearance this afternoon before U.S. District Court Chief Magistrate Judge M. Page Kelley in federal court in Boston, Jesse Moraes, Hugo Moraes and Marcos Chacon were detained pending a detention hearing.

Additionally, Chelbe Willams Moraes, a resident of Brazil, was charged in a four-count indictment unsealed today with conspiracy to encourage and induce an alien to come to, enter, and reside in the United States for financial gain; encouraging and inducing an alien to come to, enter, and reside in the United States for financial gain; money laundering; and money laundering conspiracy. He is the brother of Jesse Moraes and uncle of Hugo Moraes.

According to the charging documents, Chelbe Moraes and his coconspirators smuggled individuals from Brazil into the United States for a fee of approximately \$18,000 – 22,000. Once the individuals were in the United States, Jesse Moraes and Hugo Moraes allegedly employed them in their restaurants in Woburn, withholding their wages in order to pay off their smuggling debts. Chelbe Moraes, Jesse Moraes and Hugo Moraes also allegedly gave or offered to give fake documentation to the individuals in order to support asylum claims or obtain work authorization. Marcos Chacon allegedly sold fake documentation to the individuals at the request of the Moraes defendants.

The charge of encouraging and inducing, and conspiring to encourage and induce, an alien to come to, enter, and reside in the United States for financial gain, knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact that such coming to, entry, and residence is or will be in violation of law provides for a sentence of up to 10 years in prison, up to three years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. The charge of knowing transfer of a false identification document knowing that such document was produced without lawful authority provides for a sentence of up to 15 years in prison, up to three years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. The charge of illegal reentry by a deported alien provides for a sentence of up to two years in prison, up to three years of supervised release, and a fine of up to \$250,000. The charges of money laundering and money laundering conspiracy provide for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, three years of supervised release, and a fine of \$500,000 or twice the amount involved in the transaction, whichever is greater. 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 Rachael S. Rollins; Matthew Millhollin, Special Agent in charge for the Homeland Security Investigations New England Field Office; Jonathan Mellone, Special Agent in Charge of the Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; Joleen D. Simpson, Special Agent in Charge of the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigations in Boston; and Woburn Police Chief Robert F. Rufo, Jr., made the announcement today. Valuable assistance in the investigation was provided by the Norwood Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorneys James D. Herbert, Kelly Lawrence and Samuel R. Feldman of Rollins' Criminal Division are prosecuting the case.

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

Component(s):

[USAO - Massachusetts](#)

Updated October 4, 2022