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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2026

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**NYPD OFFICER INDICTED FOR PERJURY AND OFFICIAL MISCONDUCT FOR FALSE
TESTIMONY AND STATEMENTS IN GUN POSSESSION CASE**

*Defendant Allegedly Planted Evidence
Faces up to Seven Years in Prison, if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Miguel Vanbrakle, an NYPD officer, was indicted for perjury, tampering with physical evidence, official misconduct and other crimes for allegedly lying under oath and falsifying documents in a weapon possession case. The defendant's testimony was allegedly contradicted by video from his body-worn camera.

Vanbrakle was part of an NYPD team that executed a court-authorized search warrant, seeking firearms and other evidence, at a Cambria Heights residence in 2023. He allegedly planted evidence to tie the discovery of a gun to the target of the search warrant.

District Attorney Katz said: "As alleged, this officer was sworn to uphold the law and instead planted evidence in a gun possession case, perjured himself and lied on official documents. As a result of the defendant's alleged actions, an individual had felony gun charges pending against him for more than a year. After a thorough review of the evidence, we dismissed the gun possession case because of the alleged actions of this defendant. The evidence in this matter was placed before a grand jury and the defendant is now indicted for perjury, tampering with evidence and official misconduct."

Vanbrakle, 48, of Belle Harbor, was arraigned today on an indictment charging him with perjury in the first degree, two counts of falsifying business records in the first degree, two counts of offering a false instrument for filing in the first degree, tampering with physical evidence, official misconduct and making a punishable false written statement.

Queens Supreme Court Justice Leigh Cheng ordered the defendant to return to court on February 23. If convicted, the defendant faces up to seven years in prison.

DA Katz said that, according to the indictment and investigation, on October 19, 2023, Vanbrakle recovered a loaded .38-caliber Smith & Wesson revolver inside a locked safe underneath a bed at a Cambria Heights home. The homeowner claimed the gun was hers and not her fiancée's, who was the target of the search warrant.

Vanbrakle testified before a grand jury and stated in a criminal complaint and on NYPD property

vouchers that he recovered both the gun and a New York state benefit card belonging to the fiancée in the locked safe. The gun was the only one found in the home. The homeowner's fiancée was then indicted on felony weapon possession and other charges.

A review of body-worn camera footage showed that Vanbrakle allegedly emptied out a shoe box in the home's living room and took the benefit card from that box and put it in the safe where the gun was discovered.

DA Katz's office moved to dismiss the weapon possession case in December 2024.

Assistant District Attorney Yong Kim of the District Attorney's Public Corruption Bureau is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Bradley King, Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of acting Executive Assistant District Attorney for the Investigations Division Shawn Clark.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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