



PRESS RELEASE

# Justice Department Sues to Revoke US Citizenship of Convicted Cuban Spy

Friday, May 8, 2026

For Immediate Release

Office of Public Affairs



The U.S. Department of Justice [filed](#) a civil denaturalization complaint yesterday against Victor Manuel Rocha in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida. Rocha is a native of Colombia who was convicted of serving as an unregistered agent for the Republic of Cuba.

“Under no circumstances should an agent of a foreign adversary be permitted to hold the title of American citizen,” said Assistant Attorney General Brett Shumate. “Our mission is clear: to root out these fraudsters and preserve the sanctity of the naturalization process for those who

adhere to our laws. Any individual who lied during the naturalization process to gain a foothold in this country will be met with the full weight of the Department of Justice.”

“Victor Manuel Rocha was not a low-level operative. He was a former United States Ambassador and senior government official who admitted he secretly served the Cuban regime for decades,” said U.S. Attorney Jason A. Reding Quiñones for the Southern District of Florida. “The Southern District of Florida helped take down one of the most prolific Cuban spies ever uncovered in the United States. This civil denaturalization case is about finishing the job. The complaint alleges that Rocha obtained American citizenship through lies, concealment, and betrayal. A person who secretly serves communist Cuba should not keep the privilege of United States citizenship, even while in prison.”

The U.S. seeks an order revoking Rocha’s naturalization based on his admission in criminal proceedings that he began spying for Cuba in 1973 before he naturalized in 1978. When he applied for naturalization, Rocha represented under penalty of perjury that he had not committed crimes for which he had not been arrested; he was not affiliated with the Communist Party of Cuba; he had not advocated, believed in, or knowingly supported and furthered the interests of Communism; and he believed in the U.S. Constitution and the form of government of the U.S. None of these were true.

In 2023, Rocha was charged with several counts related to spying for the Republic of Cuba and passport fraud. U.S. v. Rocha, No. 1:23-cr-20464-Bloom (S.D. Fla. Dec. 5, 2023). In April 2024, Rocha admitted that, starting in or around 1973, he secretly supported the Republic of Cuba and its clandestine intelligence-gathering mission against the U.S. by serving as a covert agent of Cuba’s intelligence services. He pleaded guilty and was convicted of Conspiracy to Act as an Agent of a Foreign Government and to Defraud the United States and Acting as an Illegal Agent of a Foreign Government. He was sentenced to and is serving a 15-year sentence.

The U.S. will bring seven independent counts seeking the revocation of his U.S. citizenship. Rocha was not qualified for naturalization for several reasons, including that he committed unlawful acts, gave false testimony during his naturalization examination, was not attached to the principles of the U.S. Constitution and not well-disposed to the good order and happiness of the U.S., was affiliated with the Communist Party of Cuba, and advocated for communism. The U.S. will also seek the revocation of his naturalization because he procured his citizenship by concealing material facts or willful misrepresenting several facts in naturalization proceedings related to spying for Cuba.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Homeland Security Investigations, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The Denaturalization Unit of the Civil Division’s Office of Immigration Litigation and the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Florida are litigating the case.

*The claims made in the complaint are allegations only, and there has been no determination of liability.*

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## Components

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