



## Public Relations Unit

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BAHAMAS IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT PRESS RELEASE 19/21

**\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\***

### **Migrants Arraigned In a Freeport Magistrate Court for Illegal Embarkation**

On 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2021, eight (8) migrants were arraigned in the Freeport Magistrate's Court #3 before Magistrate Laquay Laing. Two (2) Romanians, one (1) Costa Rican, three (3) Ecuadorians, one (1) Eritrean and one (1) Haitian national were all charged with Illegal Embarkation. All migrants pled guilty to the offense and were convicted and fined \$300.00 each or in default of payment, serve six (6) months at the Bahamas Department of Correctional Services.

Reports are that on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021, a team of Immigration Officers rendezvoused with the United States Coast Guard (USCG) Cutter "William Flores" at the Lucayan Harbour to take custody of the above mentioned migrants. USCG reports indicate that the migrants were interdicted approximately twenty-six (26) miles off West Palm Beach, Florida. When interviewed by Immigration officials they all admitted to illegally departing from The Bahamas in an attempt to illegally enter the United States. Additionally, they possessed no document that would permit their legal entry into the United States; as a result, they were all cautioned and charged for the offense of Illegal Embarkation.

All fines were paid and migrants were escorted to the Carmichael Road Detention Centre for further processing and to await repatriation to their respective countries of origin; however, the Eritrean national will not face detention or repatriation as he is documented as an Asylum Seeker in The Bahamas.

The public is reminded that the Department is committed to executing the mandates of our agency by effectively coordinating efforts with other Law Enforcement agencies to ensure compliance with the Statute Laws of our Country.

For more information please contact the Department of Immigration's Public Relations Unit or visit our website: [www.immigration.gov.bs](http://www.immigration.gov.bs) or follow us on Facebook @immdept Bahamas Department of Immigration.

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**Mission Statement:** *To regulate the movement of people across the borders of The Bahamas so as to ensure the security, facilitate economic advancement and promote the harmonious social development of The Bahamas through the collaborative efforts of responsible government and non-government agencies both nationally and internationally*