

AP News: Man to plead guilty in human trafficking case

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — A man arrested as part of a multistate kidnapping investigation is scheduled to plead guilty Oct. 23 to transporting a woman across state lines for prostitution.

Ruperto Moncillo Flores and Jacobo Feliciano-Francisco were arrested June 27 after a distraught woman walked into a police department in Hattiesburg, Miss., and said she had been abducted in Panama City Beach, Fla.

The woman had been a witness in a prior human trafficking case, which led to numerous convictions in Tennessee and Kentucky.

Flores, of Lawrenceville, Ga., was arrested as part of the investigation into the kidnapping, but a federal grand jury indicted him on a charge of transporting a different woman across state lines for prostitution.

The plea hearing will take place in U.S. District Court in Hattiesburg.

Flores is not charged with the Florida abduction.

Feliciano-Francisco, also known as Uriel Castillo-Ochoa, is charged in U.S. District Court in Panama City, Fla., with kidnapping the former witness. He pleaded not guilty on Aug. 12 to five charges, including kidnapping and retaliating against a witness.

Authorities say the victim was in her yard in Florida when Feliciano-Francisco and an unidentified man forced her into a car and drove to Feliciano-Francisco's house in Hattiesburg. Investigators say Feliciano-Francisco sexually assaulted the victim and planned to force her to work as a prostitute in Louisiana.

Feliciano-Francisco called Flores that day and asked him to take a woman from Hattiesburg to Louisiana for the purpose of prostitution, according to court records.

The kidnapping victim escaped through a bathroom window that evening and went to the Hattiesburg Police Department.