

## **FBI agents raid San Juan, Puerto Rico city offices in fraud, obstruction investigation**

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San Juan, Puerto Rico, Mayor Carmen Yulín Cruz, attends a House Democratic Leaders news conference with Democratic Caucus Chairman Rep. Joe Crowley, D-N.Y., on Capitol Hill in Washington, on Nov. 1, 2017.

Manuel Balce Ceneta, AP

FBI agents raided municipal offices in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on Tuesday, seizing documents and digital records as part of an investigation into fraud allegations related to the city government.

Special agent in charge Douglas Leff said federal investigators are also looking into potential obstruction of the investigation. According to Leff, agents believe documents tied to the reported irregularities in the city's purchasing procedures might have been taken from the building or falsified.

At least 20 agents, mostly unarmed, entered the building carrying briefcases, cameras, electronic equipment and coffee, Puerto Rican news agency El Nuevo

Día reported. The raid was focused on the offices of San Juan's Purchasing Division.

When asked if San Juan Mayor Carmen Yulín Cruz was implicated in the investigation, Leff said, "We have no information about that, but we are going to follow the investigation where it leads us."

The mayor's office is in San Juan City Hall, in a separate location from the building raided by the FBI.

Cruz tweeted Tuesday morning that she instructed city officials to cooperate with federal authorities.

"If someone has done something wrong, they should undergo due process and face the consequences of their actions," Cruz said.

Cruz often sparred with President Donald Trump after Hurricane Maria devastated the U.S. territory last year. Their feud was recently rekindled after Trump expressed doubt about research that indicated the hurricane was responsible for nearly 3,000 deaths, a dramatic increase from the previous official death toll of 64.

Trump has blamed the slow response to the damage caused by Maria on inefficiencies in the Puerto Rican government. Last month, Trump sent a tweet quoting conservative Fox Business host Lou Dobbs, who said Puerto Rico is run by "one of the most corrupt governments in our country."

The fraud investigation was sparked by an anonymous tip to the comptroller's office of favoritism in how the mayor's office rewarded contracts, according to El Nuevo Día,

The allegation was centered on a \$4.7 million contract awarded to construction company BR Solutions. The company is owned by businessman Leonel Pereira O'Neill, who has made political donations to a number of Puerto Rican politicians, including Cruz, El Nuevo Día reported.

The FBI has not identified any suspects in the case, but Leff told reporters that a conviction for the type of fraud alleged would likely carry a maximum sentence of five years.