

PRESS RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

December 8, 2007

Local Pharmacist arrested for Embezzlement

On August 31, 2007 Memorial Hospital, Los Banos staff contacted the Police Department after a hospital audit indicated one of their Pharmacists was embezzling money from the hospital. A three month investigation led by Detective Ivan Mendez revealed that hospital Pharmacist, Robert Lopez, 50, of Los Banos, a 12 year employee, had embezzled over \$200,000, from the hospital over a four year period.

Responsible for accepting payment for various prescriptions, Lopez would divert portions of those funds to his personal account.

During the investigation Detectives served warrants for Lopez's' financial records where they learned that over the past four years Lopez deposited over 1,000 separate checks meant for the hospital, into his personal account.

In November Lopez declined to provide Detectives a statement regarding the matter. On November 20 an arrest warrant was issued for Lopez. He turned himself in to Detective Mendez where he was charged with Grand Theft and Embezzlement. Lopez subsequently posted bail and was released.

The Merced County District Attorney's Office has reviewed the report and charged Lopez with embezzlement, with an enhancement for a theft over \$150,000, as well as several counts of forgery.