



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## In Case You Missed It

### Secretary Of State Fires Top Staffers

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#### Secretary Of State Fires Top Staffers

By Gadi Schwartz  
KOB News  
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<http://www.kob.com/article/stories/s1733467.shtml?cat=504>

New Mexico’s Secretary of State Mary Herrera has fired two high ranking employees after both met with federal investigators.

Deputy Secretary of State Francisco Trujillo says former office manager Manuel Vildasol and former Secretary of State spokesman James Flores were terminated for allegedly secretly recording employees and creating a “hostile work environment.”

Both Vildasol and Flores say their firings are retaliation for meeting with the F.B.I. over allegations of criminal wrongdoing within the Secretary of State’s office.

Last month, [Vildasol publicized undercover video recordings](#) of computer technicians trying to remove pornographic viruses from Mary Herrera’s state issued laptop. The video was given to Eyewitness News 4 after Herrera and Trujillo repeatedly denied a porn virus had infected Herrera’s laptop computer.

At the time, Vildasol told Eyewitness News 4 he was tired of negative events at the office “being swept under the rug” and said the recordings were taken in an effort to document

alleged criminal wrongdoings within the Secretary of State's office.

Vildasol's attorney, Rudy Martin, says the videos and documents Vildasol collected have since been turned over to federal investigators.

Tuesday, in his first interview since being put on leave, former Secretary of State spokesman James Flores also confirmed he had met with the F.B.I. at their request and believes that meeting was the reason for his termination.

Flores also denied secretly recording the Secretary of State's office staff, saying the only time he recorded anyone was when questioned by a risk management investigator for the state who was summoned after he was placed on paid administrative leave. At the time, officials declined to specify why Flores had been put on leave.

Flores said during his interview with the state investigator that he felt his termination may have centered around a [press release that had been sent out via email under Flores' name](#) in response to Eyewitness News 4's investigation into the pornographic virus.

The release defended the Secretary of State and called the allegations in the story "political attacks" during an election year.

At the time the email was sent, Flores was out on bereavement from the death of two aunts. On Tuesday, Flores told Eyewitness News 4 that he never wrote or sent the email to reporters and also denied emailing Santa Fe County Clerk Valerie Espinoza and Former Bureau of Elections Director A.J. Salazar.

Flores also said he would take a lie detector test to prove he had not secretly recorded Secretary of State staff members if Secretary Herrera would take a lie detector test about her denials of allegations she ordered employees to campaign on her behalf while on the taxpayers' dime.

Read full story at: <http://www.kob.com/article/stories/s1733467.shtml?cat=504>

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