



**Rick Staly, Sheriff**  
**FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

*"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."*

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

**Date:** February 24, 2026  
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### **Flagler County Sheriff's Office Quickly Arrests Palm Coast Man After Stabbing and Pursuit**

BUNNELL, Fla. — The Flagler County Sheriff's Office swiftly arrested a Palm Coast Man for stabbing his roommate Monday evening at their home on Pier Lane. Deputies took the suspect quickly into custody following a vehicle pursuit.

On Feb. 23, 2026, at approximately 6:45 p.m., the victim called the Flagler County Emergency Communications Center and reported he had been stabbed at his home on Pier Lane in Palm Coast. The victim told the operator his roommate, Jose Rafael Cortes Nieves, 50, of Palm Coast, stabbed him multiple times with a small black knife and then fled the scene in a red Honda CR-V.



Jose Rafael Cortes Nieves (Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility mugshot)

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Deputies quickly located the suspect's vehicle near Belle Terre Boulevard and attempted a traffic stop. Cortes Nieves fled, and deputies initiated a vehicle apprehension. Cortes Nieves repeatedly accelerated through red lights while fleeing, which successfully ended with the deployment of stop sticks. Cortes Nieves was taken into custody without further incident.

Deputies located a black knife in the car that matched the description provided by the victim in Cortes Nieves' possession. Investigators conducted interviews and collected evidence from the scene, including security footage obtained from a nearby residence.

During an interview following his arrest, Cortes Nieves admitted to stabbing the victim and said that he wanted to apologize. Cortes Nieves said that even if he claimed he was defending himself, stabbing the victim was an excessive response and could have killed him. Cortes Nieves said he fled from deputies because he felt his "life would be over" if he went to jail.

"Cortez Nieves turned to extreme violence over a minor money dispute with his roommate. He then put others at risk by recklessly fleeing from law enforcement," said Flagler County Sheriff Rick Staly. "Our deputies acted quickly to stop this dangerous suspect and take him into custody before anyone else was hurt."

Deputies arrested Cortes Nieves for aggravated battery with a deadly weapon causing serious bodily injury and fleeing or attempting to elude law enforcement at high speed. Deputies transported Cortes Nieves to the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility, where he is being held on \$150,000 bond.

The victim was transported to an area hospital and is expected to make a full recovery.

Cortes Nieves has previous convictions in Connecticut for Possession of Narcotics, Larceny 3 and Failure to Appear.

[Video](#) of Cortes Nieves' arrest.

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