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EXCLUSIVE

# Often-busted Imam Charles Aziz Bilal snared in prostitution sting

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Jeff Bachner for News  
 Imam Charles Aziz Bilal is led from the 113th Precinct in Queens on Wednesday.

A Queens imam was busted for patronizing a prostitute, who turned out to be an undercover cop, authorities said.

Imam Charles Aziz Bilal was snared in a prostitution sting about 11 p.m. Tuesday, agreeing to pay \$25 for sex at a Howard Johnson Inn in South Jamaica.

Bilal, also a chaplain at Rikers, has been suspended from his job with the Correction Department. He was in custody late yesterday waiting to be arraigned.

"I know that's not true," said a man who regularly worships at Masjid-Al-Hamdu-Li-Llah, a mosque run by Bilal. "This is the month of Ramadan. It's not possible. In the most important month of the year, no one can believe this."

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The imam was arrested on Rockaway Blvd. near 137th Ave. - about 10 blocks from the mosque on Sutphin Blvd.

Bilal, 58, has been a chaplain on Rikers Island since 1990. He was immediately suspended without pay from his \$49,000-a-year job, said Sharman Stein, a department spokeswoman.

His arrest was part of an ongoing [NYPD](#) initiative, dubbed Operation Losing Proposition, which targets johns.

Bilal, whose job at Rikers keeps him on the lawful side of the bars, is no stranger to getting locked up. He's been arrested 18 times since 1970, sources said. His rap sheet includes collars for robbery, grand larceny, criminal possession of stolen property and bribery of a public official.

In July 2010, a city marshal found a 9-mm. semi-automatic pistol in Bilal's 2004 [Mercedes Benz](#) after it was towed to a Queens impound lot. The incident was investigated, but no arrests were made.

Bilal ran unsuccessfully for the City Council seat in his South Jamaica district in 2001.

With [Irving DeJohn](#)

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6:18:43 AM **\$25 for a BJ? Not bad. Does that include the condom?**  
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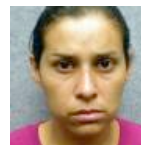
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