

Ex-California mayor facing corruption charges thinks jail cell is 'too cold'



By [Claudia Cowan](#), [Malia Zimmerman](#)



Anthony Silva in May 2016. (Calixtro Romias/The Record via AP)

Former mayor of Stockton, Calif., Anthony Silva, is spending this week in a chilly prison cell, segregated from other inmates, as he awaits a bail review hearing on Monday. He can't pay his \$1 million bond, and hopes the judge will reduce it.

The now notorious former politician, 43, faces a number of felony white-collar criminal counts related to embezzlement, money laundering, grand theft, and misuse of public funds stemming from his operation of the Stockton Kids Club (formerly the Boys & Girls Club), a non-profit that serves area youth.

These charges are separate from those filed last summer, when Silva was arrested and charged with supplying alcohol to youth counselors at a camp he ran in Amador County, including a 16-year-old boy, and with illegally recording the parties, including a strip poker game with camp youth leaders. Silva has maintained his innocence.



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Anthony Silva is accused of using public funds to pay for a Filipino dating website, Filipino Cupid.

At his first court appearance on the latest charges on Monday, dressed in a red jailhouse jumpsuit, the former mayor pleaded not guilty to six felony charges handed down in a grand jury indictment. Attorneys with the San Joaquin District Attorney's Office allege Silva defrauded the club, a non-profit, pocketing hundreds of thousands of dollars for his own private use, including trips to Lake Tahoe, and on a [Filipino dating website](#).

"He destroyed 45 years of good work at the Boys & Girls Club, a well-respected and heavily endowed institution for his own personal, ill-gotten gains," said District Attorney Tori Verber Salazar.

Silva's lawyer, Mark Reichel, told Fox News that though Silva had been traveling in Colombia, he returned to the U.S. to comply with the arrest warrant. Because the ex-mayor has extensive roots in Stockton, his lawyer said he should be released on his own recognizance.

"There is nothing to these charges," Reichel said.

Silva is enduring miserable conditions at the San Joaquin County Jail, his attorney said.

"He's freezing," Reichel said, noting Silva's cell is consistently 56 degrees. "He's being held in solitary confinement for his own protection, but solitary is also used as a punishment, so he's being punished before he's even adjudicated."

Meanwhile, other arrests may be coming, law enforcement sources said.

At least one person with close ties to Silva, Sharon Simas, is reportedly under investigation. Once named "Stocktonian of the Year," Simas was most recently listed as president of the Stockton Kids Club and served as Silva's executive assistant at City Hall. Messages left at the club have gone unreturned. Neighbors said it has been closed since federal agents served a search warrant there last week, removing computers and boxes of documents. The club's website has also been taken down.

Before being elected mayor in 2012 to lead the city of 300,000, Silva spent much of his adult career as a youth swim coach, school board president and leader for kids' camps and events.

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Silva has weathered several previous damning accusations, including three criminal probes by school board police, local police and prosecutors in Stockton.

Silva was under investigation for more than two years before the probe became public in October 2015, when Homeland Security agents detained the politician and seized his laptops and cell phone in the customs area of San Francisco's airport.

The FBI turned over the investigation to the Amador County District Attorney's office in July 2016, and the agency moved quickly to charge Silva.

In an exclusive and extensive interview in Oct. 2015 with [Fox News](#), Silva touted his affinity for children, noting he had served as the president for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Stockton for nearly a decade, served on the Stockton Unified District Board of Education from 2004 to 2008, and was appointed board president in 2006 and 2007. He also served as a City of Stockton Parks & Recreation Commissioner, was a swim coach for teen girls, operated several camps for kids including Stockton Silver Lake Camp, Miss San Joaquin and the East Stockton Yellowjackets.

After he was detained by Homeland Security agents and had his electronics seized, Silva told [Fox News](#), "I am confident that any forensic search of my personal devices will never ever show illegal or inappropriate activities of any sort."

His lawyer has maintained that the charges are politically motivated. Silva lost his re-election bid for mayor in 2016.

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