

Judge Perry Sentences Man To 120 Months For Conspiracy To Distribute Fentanyl, Possession Of Firearm

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ST. LOUIS, MO – United States District Judge Catherine D. Perry sentenced James Lamont Fields to 120 months in prison today. The 23-year-old St. Louis, Missouri resident pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute fentanyl and one count of felon in possession of a firearm. Fields, along with three other co-defendants, was involved in a conspiracy in December 2016 to distribute more than 400 grams of fentanyl.

As part of the conspiracy to distribute the fentanyl, a co-defendant maintained multiple cell phones that were passed among members of the conspiracy and which drug customers would call in order to procure fentanyl. At various times, multiple co-defendants and Fields agreed to maintain possession of the phone and distribute fentanyl to the customers on behalf of the conspiracy. During the investigation, federal agents and assisting police officers utilized undercover officers and confidential informants to do controlled purchases of fentanyl from whoever was in possession of the common cell phone. On at least one occasion, Fields answered the cell phone and distributed fentanyl to an undercover officer in the city of St. Louis.

Additionally, Fields kept in touch with his co-conspirators regarding the activities of the conspiracy even during periods of incarceration. On December 3, 2016, Fields placed a call from the St. Louis City Justice Center to a phone number and received updates from co-conspirators regarding drug trafficking and the shooting death of David Bryant.

On April 11, which was after Fields' release from the St. Louis City Justice Center, officers from the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department received a call for multiple offenders fleeing from police at a high rate of speed in a stolen vehicle. When officers spotted the vehicle, Fields fled from it and led officers on a foot chase in Downtown St. Louis. When officers found Fields, he was in possession of a bag containing a Glock model 23C, .40 caliber semi-automatic firearm and a knotted baggie containing clear capsules totaling 11.68 grams of fentanyl. Fields told officers the firearm was stolen, and he was a convicted felon. Fields agrees he responsible for more than 400 grams, but less than 1.2 kilograms.

This case was an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) investigation by the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, the St. Louis Division of the FBI, the St. Louis Division of the DEA, the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the United States Marshals Service and the St. Charles County Sheriff's Department.