

# St. Louis Man Pleads Guilty to Murder-For-Hire, Witness Tampering and Drug Charges

March 1 2021 12:39 PM

ST. LOUIS – Maurice Woodson, 34, of St. Louis, Missouri, pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute cocaine; one count of discharging a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime resulting in death; and one count of witness tampering.

Woodson appeared today before United States District Judge Henry E. Autrey who accepted the plea.

Woodson was a member of a large-scale and long-term cocaine trafficking conspiracy between 2012 and 2016. Woodson and others bought large quantities of cocaine from convicted drug trafficker Adrian Lemons and Lemons' associates in the St. Louis area. The investigat



ion into Woodson and his associates developed evidence of a well-defined distribution network with a direct Mexican source of supply for cocaine. During the course of

investigation, agents seized more than 70 kilograms of cocaine and well over \$1 million, among other things.

In furtherance of the drug trafficking conspiracy, Woodson was recruited to kill victim B.E. Woodson agreed to commit the murder. On December 5, 2013, Woodson intentionally shot and killed B.E. as B.E. attempted to enter his vehicle in the 3500 block of Kossuth. Woodson received both drugs and money as compensation for the murder. Similarly, Woodson was recruited to kill victim D.J. in furtherance of the cocaine trafficking conspiracy. On November 28, 2014, Woodson lured victim D.J. to a meeting. When D.J. arrived at the 900 block of Harlan, Woodson intentionally shot and killed D.J. Victim D.J. died as a result of his gunshot wounds. Two others who accompanied victim D.J. were also shot and injured.

In January 2016, Woodson was indicted in federal court for his roles in the drug conspiracy and December 2013 murder. Woodson was ordered detained by a magistrate judge pending trial. While detained in a local holding facility, Woodson initiated a murder-for-hire scheme. As part of the scheme, Woodson recruited an individual to murder a potential witness to the December 2013 murder committed by Woodson. Utilizing female companions, Woodson arranged meetings with and payments to the individual recruited to murder the potential witness. Unbeknownst to Woodson, the individual recruited by Woodson to commit the murder-for-hire was an undercover law enforcement official.

The judge will sentence Woodson in June 2021. In exchange for his guilty plea, the parties will jointly recommend to the Court that Woodson be imprisoned for 276 months.

This case was investigated by Homeland Security Investigations; Drug Enforcement Administration; Saint Louis Metropolitan Police Department; the Kennett, Missouri, Police Department; the United States Marshals Service; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.