



# Department of Justice

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## **Operation Synthetic Opioid Surge (S.O.S) In the Eastern District of Kentucky**

**LEXINGTON** – One year ago, the Justice Department announced the formation of Operation Synthetic Opioid Surge (S.O.S.), a program designed to reduce the supply of deadly synthetic opioids in high impact areas as well as identifying wholesale distribution networks and international and domestic suppliers.

Over the past year, 10 districts with some of the highest drug overdose death rates in the country, each targeted a county where they focused on prosecuting every readily available case involving fentanyl, fentanyl analogues, and other synthetic opioids, regardless of the drug quantity. These districts worked with DEA Special Operations Division to track and coordinate these street-level cases and also received additional assistance from the Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF).

“Our attorneys and law enforcement agents have spent the past year working tirelessly to disrupt the networks engaged in the trafficking of synthetic opioids. Today we are proud to share their successes in 10 of the districts most affected by this scourge,” Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey A. Rosen said. “The Department of Justice’s efforts have resulted in countless successes from California to Maine. We have successfully sought enhanced sentences in cases that resulted in deadly overdoses, and we have boosted cooperation among the partners involved. There remains much work to be done, but Operation S.O.S. marks a crucial turning point in the fight against synthetic opioids.”

“The success of the S.O.S. initiative is based on strong partnerships,” stated United States Attorney Robert M. Duncan, Jr. “We are fortunate to work with the Commonwealth Attorney’s Office, the Lexington Police Department, and DEA in implementing and advancing this important program.”

Fayette County was chosen as the S.O.S. location in the Eastern District of Kentucky. In November 2018, a specially-funded Assistant United States Attorney was hired to prosecute S.O.S. and related cases. Since then, 15 cases, involving 19 defendants, have been prosecuted in federal court as part of the S.O.S. initiative.

The following prosecutions are currently pending trial:

**U.S. v. Walter Powell and Elisha Wilson** (19-CR-69-S-JMH): Powell and Wilson are charged with conspiring to distribute 40 grams or more of fentanyl, possession with intent to distribute 40 grams or more of fentanyl, conspiring to distribute crack cocaine, and possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine. Trial is scheduled for September 16, 2019, in Lexington.

**U.S. v. Allen Norman** (19-CR-93-DCR): Norman is charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm. Trial is scheduled for August 29, 2019, in Lexington.

**U.S. v. Xavier Leburton Gray** (19-CR-94-DCR): Gray is charged with possession with intent to distribute fentanyl and being a felon in possession of two firearms. Trial is scheduled for August 19, 2019, in Lexington.

**U.S. v. Maurice Love, Edith Tripure, and Richard Lomax Carter** (19-CR-95-DCR): Love, Tripure, and Carter are charged with conspiring to distribute 40 grams or more of fentanyl. Love and Tripure are also charged with distribution of fentanyl and possession with intent to distribute fentanyl. Trial is scheduled for August 19, 2019, in Lexington.

**U.S. v. Julio Cesar Cordero-Barrios** (19-CR-110-JMH): Cordero-Barrios is charged with conspiring to distribute fentanyl, distribution of fentanyl, possession with intent to distribute fentanyl, and armed drug trafficking. Trial is scheduled September 10, 2019, in Lexington.

**U.S. v. Raymond Duong** (19-CR-116-KKC): Duong is charged with possession with intent to distribute 40 grams or more of fentanyl and possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine. Duong is also charged with being a felon in possession of 8 firearms. A trial date to be determined.

Overall, ten S.O.S. defendants have pleaded guilty in federal court to charges of distributing synthetic opioids or related charges and are pending sentencing, including defendants in the following cases:

**U.S. v. Michael Glover** (19-CR-05-KKC): On June 6, 2019, Glover pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute 10 grams or more of valeryl fentanyl. In his plea agreement, Glover acknowledged that he was arrested by the Lexington Police Department and ultimately found to be in possession of 58 grams of valeryl fentanyl. Glover admitted that he possessed the drugs with intent to distribute. Based upon a statutory mandatory minimum, Glover faces a sentence of not less than 5 years and not more than 40 years. Glover's sentencing is scheduled September 12, 2019, at 10:30 a.m., in Lexington.

**U.S. v. Eldronte Washington** (19-CR-26-JMH): On May 20, 2019, Washington pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute 40 grams or more of fentanyl. In his plea agreement, Washington admitted that Lexington Police officers searched his residence, discovering Washington in possession of more than 40 grams of fentanyl, three firearms, and \$4,240. Washington admitted that he intended to distribute the fentanyl. Based upon

a statutory mandatory minimum, Washington faces a sentence of not less than 5 years and not more than 40 years. Washington's sentencing is scheduled for September 9, 2019, at 11:30 a.m., in Lexington.

**U.S. v. Jameel Sleet** (19-CR-35-S-DCR): On April 24, 2019, Sleet pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute 40 grams or more of fentanyl. In his plea agreement, Sleet admitted to being a passenger in a vehicle stopped by Lexington Police officers. An officer searched Sleet and found 40 grams of fentanyl, 39 grams of cocaine, and 16 grams of crack cocaine. Sleet admitted he intended to distribute the drugs. Based upon a statutory mandatory minimum, Sleet faces a sentence of not less than 5 years and not more than 40 years. Sleet's sentencing is scheduled for August 16, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., in Lexington.

**U.S. v. Aaron Antonio Evans** (19-CR-46-S-KKC): On June 25, 2019, Evans pleaded guilty to possessing with intent to distribute 10 grams or more of acetylfentanyl. In his plea agreement, Evans admitted that he sold approximately 11 grams of acetylfentanyl. Based upon a statutory mandatory minimum, Evans faces a sentence of not less than 5 years and not more than 40 years. Evans's sentencing is scheduled for October 4, 2019, at 10:00 a.m., in Lexington.

**U.S. v. Khalid Yusef White** (19-CR-48-JMH): On April 29, 2019, White pleaded guilty to possessing with intent to distribute 10 grams or more of a substance containing acetylfentanyl and valerylfentanyl. Based upon a statutory mandatory minimum, White faces a sentence of not less than 5 years and not more than 40 years. White's sentencing is scheduled for August 12, 2019, at 11:30 a.m., in Lexington.

**U.S. v. Chris David Lewis, Jr.** (19-CR-52-KKC): On May 15, 2019, pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute 40 grams or more of fentanyl. In his plea agreement, Lewis admitted that Lexington Police officers detained him and discovered he had 58 grams of fentanyl and 13 grams of methamphetamine in his coat pocket. Lewis admitted that he planned to distribute the fentanyl. Based upon a statutory mandatory minimum, Lewis faces a sentence of not less than 5 years and not more than 40 years. Lewis's sentencing is scheduled for September 12, 2019, at 11:00 a.m., in Lexington.

**U.S. v Anthony McIntosh** (19-CR-53-JMH): On May 28, 2019, McIntosh pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute fentanyl. In his plea agreement, McIntosh admitted that he was encountered by Lexington Police officers, who discovered 21 grams of fentanyl. McIntosh admitted he intended to sell the fentanyl found in his possession. McIntosh's sentencing is scheduled for September 16, 2019, at 10:00 a.m., in Lexington.

**U.S. v. Lavonte Lee Harmon** (19-CR-70-DCR): On June 7, 2019, Harmon pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute 10 grams or more of acetylfentanyl. In his plea agreement, Harmon admitted that Lexington Police officers searched his residence and person, discovering 13 grams of acetylfentanyl, 17 grams of cocaine, and \$4,474. At Harmon's residence, officers found an additional 13 grams of cocaine and other evidence

of drug trafficking. Based upon a statutory mandatory minimum, Harmon faces a sentence of not less than 5 years and not more than 40 years. Harmon's sentencing is scheduled for October 4, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., in Lexington.

Two S.O.S. defendants have been sentenced to federal prison. On May 28, 2019, **Edward Malik Cotton** (19-CR-04-JMH) was sentenced to 100 months in prison for possessing with intent to distribute 40 grams or more of acetylfentanyl. Cotton admitted he possessed 87 grams of acetylfentanyl and a firearm.

On May 14, 2019, **Steven Ray Slone** (19-CR-06-JMH) was sentenced to 24 months in prison for possessing fentanyl with the intent to distribute. Slone admitted to possessing 7 grams of fentanyl with the intent to sell it.

Both Cotton and Slone must serve 85 % of their sentences; and upon their release from prison, they will be subject to periods of supervision by the United States Probation Office.

“We are pleased with the results of the S.O.S. initiative thus far,” stated U.S. Attorney Duncan. “Because of the hard work of law enforcement, we have held several synthetic opioid traffickers accountable for their actions; we have removed dangerous drugs from the community; and we have helped save lives. Despite this success, we recognize that there is still work to be done and we remain committed to partnering in support of the S.O.S. initiative.”

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