

# Dominican National living in Massachusetts convicted of Fentanyl distribution

A Dominican national was convicted yesterday by a federal jury of distributing fentanyl.

Bernardito Carvajal, 30, who most recently resided in Haverhill, was convicted following a five-day jury trial of two counts of distribution of fentanyl. U.S. Senior District Court Judge George A. O'Toole Jr. scheduled sentencing for March 22, 2022. Carvajal was indicted in January 2020 and has been in custody since his arrest in July 2019.

On or about June 12, 2019, Carvajal sold fentanyl in Lawrence to a 26-year-old victim, who died of an overdose the following day. Carvajal continued to sell fentanyl after the fatal overdose, including another sale on July 31, 2019 to an undercover officer, after which he was arrested. At trial, the jury convicted Carvajal of the underlying fentanyl distribution counts, but acquitted the defendant for the overdose death of the victim.

"Drug dealers make a living selling death on the installment plan – I think people lose sight of that. Drug dealers and traffickers made money off each of the 100,000 people who overdosed last year," said Acting United States Attorney Nathaniel R. Mendell. "The jury in this case found that Carvajal distributed lethal drugs and Carvajal will pay a steep price for his crimes. My office will continue to pursue and prosecute those who prey on addicts by distributing deadly drugs."

"Fentanyl is causing deaths in record numbers and DEA's top priority is to aggressively pursue anyone who distributes this poison," said Brian D. Boyle, Special Agent in Charge of the

Drug Enforcement Administration, New England Field Division. "Today's conviction not only holds Mr. Carvajal accountable for his crimes but serves as a warning to those traffickers who are fueling the opioid epidemic."

The charge of distribution of fentanyl provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, at least three years and up to a lifetime of supervised release and a fine of up to \$1 million. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

The case arose from "Operation Devil's Highway," a 10-week coordinated enforcement operation in the Merrimack Valley. The enforcement operation was a coordinated effort by federal, state and local partners to focus on drug distribution activity in the City of Lawrence and between Lawrence and New Hampshire.

Acting U.S. Attorney Mendell, DEA SAC Boyle and Andover Police Chief Patrick Keefe made the announcement. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Elysa Wan and Stephen Hassink of Mendell's Criminal Division are prosecuting the case.