

# Former Member of New Bedford Chapter of Latin Kings Sentenced for Racketeering Conspiracy

A former probationary member of the New Bedford Chapter of the Massachusetts Almighty Latin King and Queen Nation (Latin Kings) was sentenced today on racketeering charges.

Emanuel Lopez-Velez, a/k/a "King Manny," 22, was sentenced by U.S. Senior District Court Judge Rya W. Zobel to five years in prison and three years of supervised release. In August 2020, Lopez-Velez pleaded guilty to conspiracy to conduct enterprise affairs through a pattern of racketeering activity, more commonly referred to as RICO conspiracy.

Lopez-Velez admitted that on Sept. 30, 2019, he was one of multiple members of the Latin Kings who confronted and robbed rival gang members and was provided with a firearm to do so by another member of the gang. The Latin Kings members approached one of the rival gang members, surrounded him, pointed a firearm at the victim and demanded the victim's phone. During the robbery, the victim ran and Lopez-Velez chased the rival gang member firing one shot, hitting the victim in the back. The victim fell to the ground and was transported to the hospital, where he was treated and ultimately survived.

The Latin Kings are a violent criminal enterprise comprised of thousands of members across the United States. The Latin Kings adhere to a national manifesto, employ an internal judiciary and use a sophisticated system of communication to maintain the hierarchy of the organization. As alleged in court documents, the gang uses drug distribution to generate revenue, and engages in violence against witnesses and rival

gangs to further its influence and to protect its turf.

In December 2019, a federal grand jury returned an indictment alleging racketeering conspiracy, drug conspiracy and firearms charges against 62 leaders, members and associates of the Latin Kings. Lopez-Velez is the 26th defendant to be sentenced in the case.

Acting United States Attorney Nathaniel R. Mendell; Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division; Commissioner Carol Mici of the Massachusetts Department of Correction; and New Bedford Police Chief Joseph C. Cordeiro made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was also provided by the FBI North Shore Gang Task Force and the Bristol County and Suffolk County District Attorney's Offices. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Philip A. Mallard and Lauren Graber of Mendell's Criminal Division prosecuted the case.

This case is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) operation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF Program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The remaining defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.