

Massachusetts “Trinitarios” gang member pleads guilty to trafficking guns, ammo, cocaine and Fentanyl

A member of the Trinitarios street gang pleaded guilty today in federal court in Boston in connection with trafficking firearms, ammunition, cocaine and fentanyl in the Greater Lawrence area.

Arismendy Gil-Padilla, 31, of Lawrence, pleaded guilty to two counts of being a felon in possession of a firearm; two counts of distribution and possession with intent to distribute cocaine; and one count of distribution and possession to distribute 40 grams or more of fentanyl and cocaine. U.S. District Court Judge Denise J. Casper scheduled sentencing for May 26, 2022.

Gil-Padilla was indicted and arrested in November 2019 as part of a federal sweep targeting federal and state offenders, including members and associates of the Trinitarios street gang, in the Greater Lawrence area.

Beginning in 2017, law enforcement conducted an investigation into the members, associates and suppliers of the Trinitarios operating in the Greater Lawrence area. The Trinitarios is a street gang originating in the New York area with increased presence in Lawrence and the surrounding communities. According to court documents, many Trinitarios members are involved in a broad range of illegal activities including, but not limited to, firearms and drug trafficking as well as violent crimes undertaken to protect the interests of the gang and its members.

During the investigation, Gil-Padilla was identified as a

member of the Trinitarios. On eight separate occasions between April and August 2018, Gil-Padilla sold at least 16 guns, ammunition, cocaine and fentanyl to a cooperating witness. Specifically, Gil-Padilla sold the cooperating witness two handguns, ammunition and cocaine for \$3,600 on June 28, 2018; seven firearms, ammunition and cocaine for \$6,240 on July 11, 2018; cocaine and fentanyl on August 2, 2018; and seven firearms and ammunition, a laser sight, fentanyl and cocaine for \$2,900 on various dates between April and May 2018. Gil-Padilla is prohibited from possessing firearms and ammunition due to a 2014 conviction of sale of a controlled substance that was punishable by more than one year in prison.

The charge of being a felon in possession of a firearm provides for a sentence of up to 10 years in prison, up to three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. The charge of distribution of and possession with intent to distribute cocaine 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. The charge of distribution of and possession to distribute 40 grams or more of fentanyl and cocaine provides for a sentence of at least five years and up to 40 years in prison, at least four years and up to a lifetime of supervised release and a fine of up to \$5 million. Sentences are imposed by a federal district judge based on the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins; Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division; James Ferguson, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Boston Field Division; Matthew B. Millhollin, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations, Boston Field Division; Essex County District Attorney Jonathan W. Blodgett; Colonel Christopher Mason, Superintendent of the Massachusetts State Police; Commissioner Carol Mici of the

Massachusetts Department of Corrections; and Lawrence Police Chief Roy P. Vasque made the announcement. Assistant U.S. Attorney Carol E. Head of Rollins' Asset Recovery Unit is prosecuting the case.

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.