

# Mexican national sentenced to prison for Illegal re-entry into the U.S., trafficking Fentanyl

“BOSTON – A Mexican man residing in Lawrence was sentenced yesterday for possessing one kilogram of fentanyl intended for distribution and to illegally re-entering the United States after deportation.

Jesus Gracielo Garcia-Vega a/k/a Jonathan Ivan Badillo-Hernandez, 35, was sentenced by Chief U.S. District Court Judge F. Dennis Saylor to 75 months in prison followed by three years of supervised release. On March 20, 2023, Garcia-Vega pleaded guilty to one count of possession with intent to distribute fentanyl and one count of unlawful re-entry of a deported alien.

On March 23, 2022, Garcia-Vega gave a sample of fentanyl to a confidential source working with law enforcement. During that transaction, Garcia-Vega agreed to sell fentanyl the next day to the confidential source. On March 24, 2022, Garcia-Vega drove to the Premium Outlets in Wrentham with a kilogram of fentanyl inside a laundry bag, intending to sell it to the confidential source. Garcia-Vega was later stopped by police on I-495 in Westford and arrested. A Subsequent investigation determined that Garcia-Vega had been deported on several occasions from the United States, including most recently on March 23, 2016, after which he unlawfully re-entered the country.

“Fentanyl is an incredibly serious threat to public safety as it can have fatal consequences even in very small amounts. Mr. Garcia-Vega tried to pump a kilogram of this poison into our

communities. It's particularly disturbing that he engaged in this criminal behavior after entering this country unlawfully following several deportations," said Acting United States Attorney Joshua S. Levy. "This office and our law enforcement partners will continue to relentlessly pursue fentanyl distributors and ensure the safety and well-being of Massachusetts residents.

"Fentanyl distribution is destroying people's lives and wreaking havoc in our communities," said Brian D. Boyle, Special Agent in Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration, New England Field Division. "DEA and our law enforcement partners will aggressively pursue and bring to justice individuals like Mr. Garcia-Vega who distribute this deadly drug. This sentence not only holds Mr. Garcia-Vega accountable for his crimes but serves as a warning that we will do everything in our power to keep this poison off the streets of Massachusetts."

Acting U.S. Attorney Levy and DEA SAC Boyle made the announcement today. Valuable assistance in the investigation was provided by the Massachusetts State Police. Assistant U.S. Attorney Samuel R. Feldman of the Narcotics & Money Laundering Unit prosecuted the case."-Massachusetts Department of Justice.