

New Bedford Drug Trafficker Sentenced to 12 to 15 Year State Prison Term

District Attorney Tom Quinn today announced that a New Bedford cocaine trafficker has been sentenced to serve 12 to 15 years in state prison.

Emmanuel Hernandez, 35, previously of 54 State Street, Apartment 3, was sentenced last Friday after being convicted on June 15th of a charge of trafficking in excess of 200 grams of cocaine at the conclusion of a three-day trial in Fall River Superior Court.

On December 5, 2012, U.S. Postal Service Inspectors in Puerto Rico seized a suspicious package that had been mailed via Express Mail. The package was addressed to the defendant at his New Bedford apartment. The package was forwarded to the Rhode Island Mail Depot for further investigation. RI Postal Inspectors conducted an investigation, which included having a drug detection K-9 inspect the package. The dog "hit" on the package, and the inspector applied for and received a warrant to open the package. Upon opening the package, investigators found five kilograms of cocaine and notified the Bristol County District Attorney's State Police Drug Unit to assist with a controlled delivery of the package.

Trooper Jeff Whitehead was the lead investigator for this office. He applied for and received an anticipatory search warrant for 54 State Street in New Bedford. Four of the five kilos were removed from the box and replaced with bags of flower for safety reasons. Postal Inspector Jay Stern, dressed as a postal delivery agent, made the delivery. The defendant was waiting outside and accepted the package. The defendant then entered the multi-residence building, taking the package

to his 3rd floor apartment. A short time later, investigators observed the defendant exit his residence and approach a motor vehicle at which time investigators moved in and apprehended him.

The anticipatory search warrant was then executed, where investigators recovered the package from his bedroom closet. Police found no additional drugs but found implements of distribution, like Acetone, Boric Acid, a digital scale and \$23,700 in cash.

Assistant District Attorney Steve Butts, who heads up District Attorney Quinn's Drug Prosecutions Unit, prosecuted the case. In addition to the 12 to 15 year state prison sentence, Superior Court Judge Rene Dupuis also ordered the \$23,700 found in the defendant's apartment forfeited as proceed derived from illegal narcotics activities.

District Attorney Quinn applauded the work of federal and state investigators in helping to remove a drug trafficker and a large amount of cocaine from the streets of New Bedford.

"This is an example of when mandatory minimum sentences are appropriate. This was a defendant, who was clearly distributing large amounts of cocaine purely for profit. My office is committed to targeting the worst offenders in the region to make the biggest impact on public safety in Bristol County," District Attorney Quinn said. "Those individuals who are trafficking these large quantities of narcotics will be targeted, investigated, apprehended, prosecuted severely and sentenced to lengthy state prison terms."