

New Bedford Man Pleads Guilty to Being Felon in Possession of Firearm and Ammunition

A New Bedford man pleaded guilty yesterday in federal court in Boston to illegally possessing a Mustang .380 pistol and ammunition.

Victor Morales, 35, pleaded guilty to one count of possessing a firearm and ammunition while being a convicted felon. U.S. District Court Judge Patti B. Saris scheduled sentencing for Sept. 10, 2021. Morales was indicted by a federal grand jury in November 2020.

On approximately July 20, 2020, Morales possessed a Colt MK IV Mustang .380 loaded pistol and 12 rounds of .380 caliber ammunition in his apartment. Federal law prohibits Morales from possessing a firearm or ammunition due to a prior felony conviction.

The charge of being a convicted felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition provides for a sentence of up to 10 years in prison, up to three years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Acting United States Attorney Nathaniel R. Mendell; Kelly D. Brady, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Boston Field Division; and New Bedford Police Chief Joseph C. Cordeiro made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kenneth G. Shine and Evan Gotlob of Mendell's Major Crimes Unit are prosecuting the case.

This case is part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), a

program bringing together all levels of law enforcement and the communities they serve to reduce violent crime and make our neighborhoods safer for everyone. The Department of Justice reinvigorated PSN in 2017 as part of the Department's renewed focus on targeting violent criminals, directing all U.S. Attorney's Offices to work in partnership with federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement and the local community to develop effective, locally-based strategies to reduce violent crime.