

Jun 28, 2024

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OFFICE OF THE
ATTORNEY GENERAL
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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution Charge Nine Individuals in Fentanyl Trafficking Ring



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution today announced the shutdown of a fentanyl trafficking ring. The Polk County Sheriff's Office and Florida Department of Law Enforcement arrested 64 individuals involved in the trafficking organization and Attorney General Moody's Statewide Prosecutors are charging nine of the defendants with felony counts of Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations, conspiracy to commit RICO and fentanyl trafficking among other charges. The group, led by Hector Torres, Miguel Castro-Rivera and Luis Delgado, sold fentanyl throughout Polk and Osceola counties. The investigation uncovered that most of the transactions originated from two businesses, a fish-and-bait shop and a motorcycle shop, owned by two of the ring's conspirators. Over the course of the investigation, authorities seized 742 grams of fentanyl, enough to kill 371,000 Floridians.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Florida leads the nation in fentanyl seizures, and this case is yet another example of how Sheriff Grady Judd and his deputies are leaders in helping us remove deadly drugs from our streets. Working with Polk County deputies and FDLE, we were able to seize 742 grams of fentanyl in two counties. That is enough poison to kill 371,000 Floridians, and I have no doubt that this drug-interdiction operation saved lives."

According to the PCSO investigation, Torres, Castro-Rivera and Delgado, and co-conspirators Pilar Rivera, Wilma Fuentes Laureano, Norberto Otero, Jr., Luis Lopez Torres, Abel Flores and Jeimylee Rivera, sold fentanyl in Polk and Osceola counties. The group generally sold small quantities of the deadly substance in an attempt to avoid detection by authorities. The trafficking ring used countersurveillance techniques, such as cameras outside residences and businesses, multiple cellphones and changing the location of drug deals when possible. In addition to the 742 grams of fentanyl, authorities seized more than 3,500 grams of cocaine, 13 grams of methamphetamine, 57 grams of oxycodone and more than 228 grams of marijuana.

Attorney General Moody's Statewide Prosecutors charged Torres, Castro-Rivera and Delgado with RICO, a first-degree felony. All defendants except Flores are charged with conspiracy to RICO, a first-degree felony. Rivera, Delgado and Fuentes are additionally charged with trafficking in fentanyl, a first-degree felony. Flores is charged with sale of fentanyl, a second-degree felony.

Attorney General Moody's OSP will prosecute the nine defendants' cases. The remaining single-judicial circuit cases will be handled by the local state attorney.

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