



Department of Justice

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Middle District of Florida

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POLK COUNTY MAN CONVICTED OF FIREARMS CHARGE

Tampa, FL - U.S. Attorney A. Brian Albritton announces that a federal jury today found Miguel Florez-Hernandez (age 28, of Polk County) guilty of possessing firearms and ammunition as an illegal alien. Florez faces a maximum penalty of ten years in federal prison. His sentencing hearing is scheduled for November 12, 2009. Florez had been indicted on April 22, 2009.

According to court documents, on February 4, 2009, the Polk County Sheriff's Office was executing a narcotics-related search at a residence in Winter Haven when four individuals in a Dodge Durango pulled up to the house. A detective approached the vehicle and asked for identification. Florez, in the backseat, tried to hide a loaded .45 caliber semi-automatic handgun and a loaded .380 caliber semi-automatic handgun under his jacket. Both weapons had rounds in the chamber, and Florez had .45 caliber rounds in his pocket. In addition, two other firearms were recovered from the vehicle. Florez is a native and citizen of Mexico, and was illegally in the United States.

As was noted in open court prior to commencement of the trial, Florez and the other occupants of the vehicle were wearing necklaces with images of La Santisma Muerte (a/k/a the saint of death) and Jesus Malverde (a/k/a the narco-saint). Florez is alleged to be a

member of the Mexican Mafia gang.

This case was investigated by the Polk County Sheriff's Office and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Thomas N. Palermo and Shauna S. Hale.