

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 14, 2008

Previously Convicted Jersey City Felon
Sentenced to 10 Years in Prison for Weapons Possession

(More)

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NEWARK – A Jersey City man who was convicted after a jury trial of possessing an unregistered short-barreled shotgun was sentenced today to 10 years in federal prison, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge William H. Walls also ordered that Jason Lofton, 24, of Jersey serve three years of supervised release upon completion of his custodial sentence. Judge Walls ordered Lofton to surrender to the federal Bureau of Prisons by July 14 to begin serving his prison sentence.

After a six-day trial in November 2007, Lofton was convicted on two counts: one count of possession of an unregistered short-barreled shotgun, and one count of being a previously convicted felon in possession of a firearm. Each charge carried a maximum statutory sentence of 10 years in prison.

As related in court, Lofton's criminal record includes three state convictions for possession of a controlled dangerous substance (cocaine) with intent to distribute in a school zone.

In determining the sentence, Judge Walls consulted the United States Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, was not bound by those guidelines in determining the sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all of that time.

Christie credited the work of Special Agents from the Newark Field Division of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Matthew W. Horace, as well as members of the Jersey City Police Department, under the direction of Chief of Police Thomas J. Comey, and the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office, which referred the case for federal prosecution, under the direction of Prosecutor Edward J. DeFazio.

Lofton was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph Mack of the Violent Crimes Unit and Assistant United States Attorney Andrew Kogan of the Terrorism Unit of the Criminal Division of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Newark.

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Defense Attorney: Dennis McAlevy, Union City

