



U.S. Department of Justice

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NEWS RELEASE
SATHAPHAN FACES NEW FEDERAL CHARGES
FOR ALLEGED DRUG DISTRIBUTION
AND FIREARM VIOLATION

SALT LAKE CITY – A federal grand jury returned a five-count indictment Wednesday afternoon charging Michael Sathaphan, age 26, of Salt Lake City with four counts of possession of drugs with intent to distribute and possession of a firearm following a felony conviction.

The drug counts in the indictment allege Sathaphan possessed methamphetamine, cocaine, ecstasy, and marijuana which he intended to distribute. The potential maximum penalty for the methamphetamine, cocaine, and ecstasy counts in the indictment is 20 years per count. The potential penalty for the marijuana count is five years.

The indictment also alleges that Sathaphan was in possession of a Sig-Sauer semi automatic handgun and ammunition, a violation of federal law since he is a convicted felon. He faces up to 10 years in federal prison if he is convicted of this count.

Sathaphan was arrested by Salt Lake City police officers during the early morning hours of March 6, 2011, at a house in Salt Lake City after responding to a call about a man with a gun.

Sathaphan was convicted of federal drug and firearms violations in October 2003 and sentenced to 63 months in federal prison and 48 months of supervised release. He admitted he had 69.3 grams of methamphetamine at his home which he intended to distribute to others. He also admitted that he was a regular user of methamphetamine and was in possession of several firearms. Under federal law, individuals addicted to controlled substances cannot possess a firearm.

In July 2009, he was arrested on violations of his supervised release and was sentenced to five months in federal prison. In August 2010, he was sentenced to another five months in federal prison after violating conditions of supervised release again.

Indictments are not findings of guilt. Individuals charged in indictments are presumed innocent unless or until proven guilty in court.

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