

NEWS

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Palmyra Man Pleads Guilty to Illegally Dealing In Firearms and Crack Cocaine

(More)

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CAMDEN – A Palmyra man pleaded guilty today to weapon and drug charges for illegally selling firearms and distribution of crack cocaine, Acting U.S. Attorney Ralph J. Marra, Jr., announced.

Joseph Adams, 26, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Robert B. Kugler to a three-count Indictment that charges him with one count of engaging in the business of dealing in firearms with being a federally licensed firearms dealer and two counts of illegally trafficking in crack cocaine. Judge Kugler continued the defendant's detention and scheduled sentencing for June 4.

At his plea hearing, Adams admitted that between April 4 and June 21, 2007, he engaged in the business of dealing firearms without being federally licensed dealer, importer or manufacturer of firearms. Adams admitted that during this time period, and on six separate occasions in Burlington or Camden Counties, he sold six firearms to an individual who was cooperating with law enforcement.

Adams admitted the firearms he sold included; a Colt .45 caliber handgun with a defaced serial number; a Smith and Wesson .357 caliber handgun; a Norinco 7.62 x 39mm caliber rifle; a High Standard .22 caliber handgun; a Lorcin .25 caliber handgun; and a Smith and Wesson .38 caliber handgun,

Furthermore, Adams admitted that on Feb. 17, 2007, he sold 6.95 grams of crack cocaine to the same individual. On June 21, 2007, Adams again sold 2.79 grams of crack cocaine to the same individual and this time possessed a Smith and Wesson .38 caliber handgun during the drug transaction.

Count One of the Indictment, which charges dealing in firearms without a federal firearms dealer license, carries a maximum penalty of 5 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the aggregate loss to the victims or gain to the defendants. Count Two, which charges illegal trafficking in crack cocaine carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 5 years in prison with a maximum statutory penalty of 40 years and a fine of up to \$2 million. Count Three, which charges illegally trafficking in crack cocaine, carries a maximum statutory penalty of 20 years and a fine of up to \$1 million.

In determining an actual sentence, Judge Kugler will consult the advisory U.S. 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, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms

must serve nearly all that time.

Marra credited Special Agents of the ATF's Trenton Satellite Office, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Matthew W. Horace, with the investigation leading to the guilty plea.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew T. Smith of the Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense Attorney: Lori Koch, Esq. Assistant Federal Public Defender