

# Department of Justice

United States Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr.  
Western District of New York

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CONTACT: BARBARA BURNS  
PHONE: (716) 843-5817  
FAX: (716) 551-3051

## **FORMER ROCHESTER MAN SENTENCED ON DRUG, ILLEGAL REENTRY CHARGES**

ROCHESTER, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Jose Benitez-Gomez, 29, formerly of Rochester, N.Y., who was convicted of conspiracy to import 500 grams or more of cocaine and illegal reentry by a removed alien, was sentenced to 156 months in prison by U.S. District Judge David G. Larimer.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Frank H. Sherman, who handled the case, stated that Benitez-Gomez and his co-conspirators arranged for the importation of cocaine into the United States from Panama during 2011. On May 26, 2011, at the request of Benitez-Gomez, an Express Mail parcel was mailed from Panama to an acquaintance of the defendant's in Brockport, N.Y. The package contained four picture frames which had just under a kilogram of cocaine secreted inside them. Benitez-Gomez never received the package which was intercepted by federal law enforcement agents. The defendant intended to distribute the cocaine in the western New York area.

Benitez-Gomez, a Dominican national, was deported from the United States in 1997, 2001 and 2009 for being in the United States unlawfully, the latter two times after being convicted of drug felony offenses in New York State. He returned illegally to the United States again in 2010. In June 2011, Benitez-Gomez was found in Brockport by federal law enforcement officers. The defendant was living under the alias of "Hector Medina."

The sentencing is the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge James C. Spero.

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