

For Immediate Release
September 19, 2011

**FORMER APD OFFICER SENTENCED TO TWELVE MONTHS
FOR FEDERAL OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE CONVICTION**

*Ahrensfield to serve six months in federal custody
and six months under home confinement*

ALBUQUERQUE – United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales announced that, this afternoon in Albuquerque federal court, former Albuquerque Police Officer **Brad Ahrensfield**, 46, was sentenced to confinement for twelve months and a day for his conviction on an obstruction of justice charge. Ahrensfield is to serve six months and a day in federal custody and six months under home confinement with GPS monitoring. He will be on supervised release for three years after he completes his sentence. Ahrensfield remains on conditions of release pending surrender to a federal correctional facility to be designated by the U.S. Bureau of Prisons.

Ahrensfield was indicted on December 3, 2009, and charged with one count of obstruction of justice and one count of making false statements to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The charges were based on allegations that Ahrensfield had tipped off a friend, who was a target of an ongoing federal narcotics and stolen merchandise investigation, and lying to FBI agents about disclosing the investigation. In April 2010, a jury acquitted Ahrensfield on the false statements charge but failed to reach a verdict on the obstruction of justice charge. The case was retried in December 2010 and, on December 16, 2010, the jury returned a guilty verdict on the obstruction of justice charge.

The evidence at the second trial established that, during September 18 through 23, 2009, Shawn Bryan and his company, Car Shop, were under investigation for drug trafficking, transporting stolen property, and related financial crimes by a task force operation called

Operation Safe Streets led by the FBI. As part of that investigation, a confidential informant (CI), who was acting under the supervision of the task force, purchased small amounts of marijuana and cocaine from Bryan's mechanic. The investigative plan contemplated having the CI buy a quarter ounce of crack cocaine from the mechanic on September 23, 2009; arresting the mechanic without Bryan's knowledge; and having the mechanic cooperate in the investigation to expose the full scope of Bryan's criminal activities.

The undercover buy planned for September 23, 2010 had to be scuttled because Ahrensfield leaked details of the investigation to Bryan, who was his friend. According to trial testimony, late at night on September 22, 2009, Ahrensfield arranged a meeting with Bryan taking precautions not to use his own cell phone or his own car. Rather than meeting at one of their homes or a public place, Ahrensfield instructed Bryan to put on a cap, leave his cell phone at home, leave his neighborhood, and walk east along a particular street. Ahrensfield picked up Bryan and drove around the city in the dark as he disclosed every detail of the investigation. The following morning, Bryan told his mechanic about the investigation. Although the mechanic was arrested on September 23, 2009 as planned, the task force could not continue its investigation because Ahrensfield had disclosed the investigation to Bryan.

After today's sentencing hearing, U.S. Attorney Gonzales said, "Today, Brad Ahrensfield was sentenced to serve a term of six months imprisonment. Although I sought a longer prison sentence for Ahrensfield given the magnitude of the offense for which he was convicted, I respect and accept the sentence imposed by the court. Today's prison sentence sends a strong message to the law enforcement community about the importance of honoring their oath to serve and protect the people, and serves to deter officers from violating the law. While the vast majority of law enforcement officers carry out their difficult duties in an honorable and

professional way, when officers do cross the line and violate the law, they need to know that they will be held accountable. At this point, Ahrensfield stands convicted of a serious felony offense, and the I will continue to investigate and prosecute officers like Ahrensfield who cross that line and to seek sentences that reflect the seriousness of their crimes. I commend Chief Ray Schultz and the Albuquerque Police Department for supporting my Office and the FBI in the investigation and prosecution of this important case.”

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Tara C. Neda and Gregory J. Fouratt, and was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation with assistance from the Albuquerque Police Department.

###

11-394