



# Department of Justice

Robert M. Duncan, Jr.  
United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Kentucky

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CONTACT: Gabrielle Dudgeon  
PHONE: (859) 685-4887  
E-MAIL: [gabrielle.dudgeon@usdoj.gov](mailto:gabrielle.dudgeon@usdoj.gov)

## West Virginia Man Pleads Guilty to Armed Drug Trafficking

**PIKEVILLE, Ky.** - A Williamson, W. Va. man, Curtis Hight, 38, pleaded guilty in federal court on Friday, before U.S. Magistrate Judge Edward Atkins, to distributing heroin and crack cocaine and possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.

Hight admitted that on October 16, 2019, in Pike County, he sold heroin and crack cocaine to a confidential witness from his residence. According to his plea agreement, during the controlled purchase, a handgun was within arm's reach of Hight when he made the sale. Officers seized 13 firearms, ammunition, a bulletproof vest, one gram of heroin, 2.5 grams of crack cocaine, \$15,775 in cash, and paraphernalia consistent with drug trafficking from his residence.

Hight was indicted in November 2019.

Robert M. Duncan, Jr., United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky; James Robert Brown, Special Agent in Charge, FBI Louisville Field Office; and Commissioner Rodney Brewer, Kentucky State Police, jointly announced the guilty plea.

The investigation was conducted by the FBI and KSP. The United States was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jason Parman and Nick Rabold.

Hight faces up to 20 years in prison for the heroin trafficking charge, and not less than five years for the firearms charge, which must run consecutively. However, any sentence will be imposed by the Court after consideration of the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the federal sentencing statutes.

This is another case prosecuted as part of the Department of Justice's "[Project Safe Neighborhoods](#)" Program (PSN), which is a nationwide, crime reduction strategy aimed at decreasing violent crime in communities. It involves a comprehensive approach to public safety — one that includes investigating and prosecuting crimes, along with prevention and reentry efforts. In the Eastern District of Kentucky, U.S. Attorney Robert Duncan Jr., coordinates PSN efforts in cooperation with various federal, state, and local law enforcement officials.

This case is also part of Project Guardian, the Department of Justice's signature initiative to reduce gun violence and enforce federal firearms laws. Initiated by the Attorney General in the fall of 2019, Project Guardian draws upon the Department's past successful programs to reduce



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gun violence; enhances coordination of federal, state, local, and tribal authorities in investigating and prosecuting gun crimes; improves information-sharing by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives when a prohibited individual attempts to purchase a firearm and is denied by the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), to include taking appropriate actions when a prospective purchaser is denied by the NICS for mental health reasons; and ensures that federal resources are directed at the criminals posing the greatest threat to our communities. Click [here](#) for more information about Project Guardian.

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