



# Department of Justice

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

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

## Boyle County Man Sentenced to 120 Months for Drug Trafficking and Possession of Firearm by Convicted Felon

**FRANKFORT, Ky.** - Richard Simpson, 33, of Danville, Kentucky, was sentenced to 120 months in federal prison on Friday, before U.S. District Judge Gregory Van Tatenhove, after previously admitting that he distributed heroin and was illegally in possession of a firearm as a convicted felon.

Simpson admitted that, on August 19, 2018, he was in his vehicle at a motel parking lot, when law enforcement officers arrested him on an outstanding warrant for a parole violation. Upon Simpson's arrest, officers found him in possession of 3.5 grams of heroin and \$5,150 in cash, along with a .45 caliber pistol. Simpson further admitted that inside his motel room he had additional heroin, methamphetamine, and another firearm. During a search of the room, officers located 13.066 grams of heroin, 19 grams of methamphetamine, and a .22 caliber pistol. Simpson admitted to possessing the heroin and methamphetamine with intent to distribute, and to unlawfully possessing firearms.

Simpson pleaded guilty in February 2020.

Simpson has previously been convicted of five felony offenses: Possession of a Controlled Substance First Degree, in 2018; Trafficking in a Controlled Substance First Degree (two counts), in 2013; Burglary Third Degree and Criminal Mischief, in 2006; and Possession of a Controlled Substance First Degree, in 2006.

Under federal law, Simpson must serve 85 percent of his prison sentence; and upon his release from prison, he will be under the supervision of the U.S. Probation Office for six years.

Robert M. Duncan, Jr., United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky; Shawn Morrow, Special Agent in Charge for ATF; and Sheriff Derek Robbins, Boyle County Sheriff's Department, jointly announced the sentence.

The investigation was conducted by the ATF and the Boyle County Sheriff's Department. The United States was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Francisco Villalobos II.

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 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.

The year 2020 marks the 150th anniversary of the Department of Justice. Learn more about the history of our agency at [www.Justice.gov/Celebrating150Years](http://www.Justice.gov/Celebrating150Years).

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