



Department of Justice

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Lexington Man Sentenced to 83 Months for Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon

FRANKFORT, Ky.— Darryl W. Stewart, Jr., 32, of Lexington, was sentenced to 83 months in federal prison on Tuesday, by U.S. District Judge Gregory VanTatenhove, after pleading guilty to possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

According to Stewart's plea agreement, he admitted that on September 3, 2019, law enforcement found him in possession of a handgun. Stewart admitted that he was a convicted felon and was prohibited from possessing a firearm.

Stewart was previously convicted of Reckless Homicide in Fayette Circuit Court, in December 2015. Stewart pleaded guilty to the current charge in December 2020.

Under federal law, Stewart 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 three years.

Carlton S. Shier, IV, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky; Shawn Morrow, Special Agent in Charge, ATF, Louisville Field Division; and Chief Lawrence Weathers, Lexington Police Department, jointly announced the sentence.

The investigation was conducted by ATF and the Lexington Police Department. The United States was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Cynthia Rieker.

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, the U.S. Attorney 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 targeted 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.

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