



# Department of Justice

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## Whitley County Man Sentenced for Aggravated Methamphetamine Trafficking

*Defendant last of 16 sentenced in Methamphetamine Conspiracy*

**LONDON, Ky.** — A Williamsburg, Kentucky, man, Nathan Blankenship, 35, was sentenced to 50 months in federal prison on Friday, by U.S. District Judge Robert E. Wier, for aggravated methamphetamine trafficking.

Blankenship was part of a 16-defendant methamphetamine trafficking organization which spread across Georgia, Tennessee, and Kentucky. The investigation revealed that the conspiracy was supplied by a Chattanooga, Tennessee, man, Chad Burnette, 36. Burnette, who was incarcerated in the Georgia Department of Corrections, used social media platforms, smuggled cell phones, and used Green Dot cards to move over 100 kilograms of methamphetamine, into the Eastern District of Kentucky, from December of 2018 through January of 2020. Burnette utilized cartel connections to fulfill his methamphetamine orders.

Burnette employed middleman Michael Revis, 32, of Chattanooga, Tennessee to arrange methamphetamine drops in Atlanta, for Kentucky based traffickers. Revis charged his fellow co-conspirators a 10% commission to arrange the transactions with Burnette. On August 11, 2021, Revis was convicted of aggravated methamphetamine trafficking and witness tampering, following a federal jury trial in London. The ATF seized over a dozen firearms in connection with the investigation including assault rifles, homemade explosives, and body armor.

The other defendants received the following sentences for their roles in the drug trafficking operation:

- Michael Revis, 32, of Chattanooga, 324 months and 5 years supervised release
- Chad Lee Burnette, 36, of Chattanooga, 276 months and 5 years supervised release
- Charles Coleman Burnette, 58, of Hamilton County, Tenn., 89 months and 4 years supervised release
- Diana Faye Elliott, 34, of Hixson, Tenn., 98 months and 3 years supervised release

- Michael Brock, 61, of Frakes, Ky., 65 months and 4 years supervised release
- Goldie Webb, 65, of Frakes, 35 months and 3 years supervised release
- Phillip Ohara (deceased), of Williamsburg, Ky., 100 months, 5 years supervised release
- David Lee Butler, 42, of Williamsburg, 105 months and 5 years supervised release
- Dakota Sean Wade Lovins, 26, of Williamsburg, 69 months and 5 years supervised release
- Danny Elliott, 44, of Williamsburg, 88 months and 5 years supervised release
- Ashley Lynn Lay, 38, of Williamsburg, 91 months and 5 years supervised release
- Jerry White, 44, of Williamsburg, 60 months and 4 years supervised release
- Herbert Hood, 46, of Williamsburg, 23 months and 2 years supervised release
- Ronnie Albertini, 41, of Duff, Tenn., 78 months, 5 years supervised release
- Ricky Ayers, 36, of Lafollette, Tenn., 65 months and 5 years supervised release
- Tammy Elliott, 42, of Jellico, Tenn., 100 months and 5 years supervised release

Under federal law, each of the defendants must serve 85 percent of their prison sentences.

“There are few greater threats to our community than illegal drug trafficking, which frequently brings with it firearms, violence, overdoses, and other criminal activity,” said Carlton S. Shier, IV, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky. “We, along with our law enforcement partners, remain committed to using all the tools available to us to combat this danger to our community, including enhancing our focus on the detection, prosecution and punishment of armed, violent drug traffickers, whose crimes take an enormous toll on the safety and security of us all.”

“Drug trafficking organizations often use firearms to further their criminal activity, increasing the threat to our communities,” said ATF Special Agent in Charge Shawn Morrow of the Louisville Division. “Protecting the public is at the core of ATF’s mission. ATF’s Louisville Division will continue to work with our partners, like the DEA and Williamsburg Police, to target armed drug dealers and remove them from our communities. This investigation is an example of our commitment to protecting the public and making Kentucky safer.”

“Drug trafficking organizations that threaten the health and safety of our communities with violence and illicit drugs will be brought to justice,” said Special Agent in Charge J. Todd Scott, Special Agent in Charge, DEA, Louisville Field Division. “The DEA, working with our law enforcement partners, remains committed to this mission, at a time when Americans are dying from drug overdoses in record numbers.”

U.S. Attorney Shier; SAC Morrow, ATF, Louisville Field Division; SAC Scott, DEA, Louisville Field Division; and Chief Wayne Bird, Williamsburg Police Department, jointly announced the sentences.

The investigation was conducted by the ATF, the DEA, and the Williamsburg Police Department. The United States was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jenna E. Reed and Jason Parman.

This 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. The PSN program 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 Shier coordinates PSN efforts in cooperation with various federal, state, and local law enforcement officials.

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