



Department of Justice

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Fayette County Man Sentenced to 32 Years for Cocaine and Fentanyl Trafficking

LEXINGTON, Ky. – A Lexington man, Maurice A. Taylor, 44, was sentenced on Thursday to 385 months in federal prison, by Chief U.S. District Judge Danny C. Reeves, for two counts of possession with intent to distribute cocaine (five kilograms and 500 grams) and one count of possession with intent to distribute 400 grams of fentanyl.

According to Taylor's plea agreement, law enforcement was conducting an investigation into a residence that was being used to unload large shipments of illegal drugs. On or about October 19, 2020, a trailer arrived at the residence and was pulled into the garage. Shortly thereafter, Taylor had a woman come to the residence, where Taylor placed an item in her vehicle. When she was stopped by police, she was in possession of approximately three kilograms of cocaine. Inside the residence, police also found approximately 182 grams of a substance containing fentanyl.

Later, law enforcement was conducting a similar investigation, at a second residence, also involving the unloading of large shipments of drugs from a trailer. On or about August 19, 2021, Taylor was followed to this second residence, where he waited for the resident to arrive. Upon her arrival, they went into the residence and stayed for a few minutes. Taylor then exited the residence with something under his shirt. When he was apprehended, he was in possession of approximately one kilogram of cocaine and \$18,166 in cash. After his arrest, a search warrant was executed at the second residence, where law enforcement found an additional 7.9 kilograms of fentanyl.

Taylor pleaded guilty in July 2022.

"The defendant was dealing in massive amounts of illicit drugs, including more than eight kilograms of fentanyl," said Carlton S. Shier, IV, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky. "Fentanyl can be deadly in very small amounts – as little as two milligrams – meaning he had millions of potentially lethal doses of this incredibly dangerous drug. For that reason, there can be little question that this investigation and arrest saved countless lives and dodged a massive impact on our community. He unquestionably deserves the sentence imposed and I commend the dedicated work of all our law enforcement partners, whose efforts made this

prosecution possible – and this community safer.”

"For years, Mr. Taylor has trafficked illicit drugs throughout the Lexington community wreaking havoc on countless families," said Special Agent in Charge Jodi Cohen of the FBI Louisville Field Office. "Through steadfast collaboration with the Lexington Police Department, DEA, U.S. Attorney's Office - EDKY, he will now spend the better part of the rest of his life incarcerated. Today's sentence should send a clear message to those dealing illegal drugs, you will be held accountable."

"Individuals who cause harm and misery in their community through the sale of illicit drugs should bear the full brunt of the justice system," said J. Todd Scott, Special Agent in Charge, DEA Louisville Field Division. "Mr. Taylor preyed on vulnerable people and he must now account for his misdeeds by spending decades housed in a federal prison."

"It takes all of us to keep our communities safe. I want to thank all of our federal partners who worked with the Lexington Police Department to apprehend and prosecute Mr. Taylor, said Chief Lawrence Weathers, Lexington Police Department. "Because of these efforts, we were able to stop an individual from supplying dangerous narcotics in our community."

Under federal law, Taylor must serve 85 percent of his prison sentence. He will be under the supervision of the U.S. Probation Office for eight years after his release from prison.

United States Attorney Shier; FBI SAC Cohen; DEA SAC Scott; and Lexington Police Chief Weathers, jointly announced the sentencing.

The investigation was conducted by the FBI, DEA, and Lexington Police Department. The United States was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Roger West.

This case was prosecuted as part of the Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force's (OCDETF) Operation Synthetic Opioid Surge (SOS), a Department of Justice initiative designed to target trafficking of dangerous synthetic opioids.

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