



U. S. Department of Justice

*Lawrence Keefe
United States Attorney
Northern District of Florida*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, September 28, 2020

For more information, contact:
U.S. Attorney's Office
Northern District of Florida
(850) 216-3829
USAFLN.Press.Office@usdoj.gov
Follow us on Twitter @NDFLnews

**FISHING VESSEL CREW MEMBER SENTENCED TO 40 MONTHS IN FEDERAL
PRISON FOR ASSAULT ON THE HIGH SEAS AFTER STABBING
SHIP'S CAPTAIN OFF PENSACOLA COAST**

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA – Robert Lester Odom, 47, of Pensacola, Florida, was sentenced on Friday, September 25, to 40 months in federal prison after having pled guilty to the charge of assault with a dangerous weapon with intent to do bodily harm. The sentence was announced by Lawrence Keefe, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida.

"This vicious attack was made even more serious due to the vessel's location, so far away from help," said U.S. Attorney Keefe. "Reducing violent crime is a top priority for the Justice Department and our District, and as federal prosecutors we will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to hold these criminals accountable for their actions."

The facts introduced at the sentencing hearing revealed that on September 27, 2019, Odom, a crew member on a commercial fishing boat, attacked and wounded the vessel's captain with a pellet rifle and a long-blade knife. At the time of the offense, the vessel was at sea approximately 20-26 nautical miles south-southeast of Perdido Pass, with a captain and two crew members. While fishing shortly before 9:30 pm, Odom shot the captain in the chest with a pellet rifle and then, after a struggle, stabbed the captain twice, causing immediate, profuse bleeding. United States Coast Guard and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission officers responded to a call for help, and United States Coast Guard personnel administered first aid to the captain. The captain was then flown by helicopter to Sacred Heart Hospital in Pensacola.

"The Coast Guard's commitment to protecting life at sea, and upholding our nation's laws, are our highest priorities," said Rear Admiral John Nadeau, Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District. "I'm proud of our dedicated men and women who responded to save the victim in this case, and worked with our law enforcement partners to ensure justice was served."

As part of his sentence, Odom was ordered to pay \$12,180 in restitution to the victim. In addition, after serving his term of imprisonment, Odom will begin a three year term of federal supervised release.

This case was investigated by the United States Coast Guard Investigative Service. Assistant United States Attorney Ryan Love prosecuted the case.

The United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Florida is one of 94 offices that serve as the nation's principal litigators under the direction of the Attorney General. To access public court documents online, please visit the [U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida](#) website. For more information about the United States Attorney's Office, Northern District of Florida, visit <http://www.justice.gov/usao/fln/index.html>.

#