

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

District of New Mexico

United States of America
v.Stevie Anthony Lovato
Year of birth: 1986

Case No.

MJ 26-299 SCY



Defendant(s)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of 1/26/2026 in the county of San Juan in the
 District of New Mexico, the defendant(s) violated:

*Code Section**Offense Description*21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(B)
(vi)

18 U.S.C. §§ 922(g)(1) and 924

18 U.S.C. § 924(c)(1)(A)(i)

Possession with intent to distribute 40 grams and more of fentanyl
(N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl)-4-piperidiny] propanamide)

Felon in possession of a firearm

Possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See attached affidavit.

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

Complainant's signature

Courtney S. Gale, Special Agent

Printed name and title

Telephonically sworn and electronically signed.

Date: 01/28/2026

Judge's signature

City and state: Albuquerque, New Mexico

Steven C. Yarbrough, U.S. Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

VS

STEVIE ANTHONY LOVATO
YOB: 1986

Case No. _____

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF
PROBABLE CAUSE ARREST

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF A PROBABLE CAUSE ARREST

I, Courtney S. Gale, being duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

1. I make this affidavit is made in support of a Criminal Complaint and an Arrest Warrant for Stevie Anthony Lovato (hereinafter referred to as LOVATO), year of birth 1986.

2. I am currently serving as an FBI Special Agent assigned to the FBI, Albuquerque Division, Farmington Resident Agency, where I primarily investigate crimes that occur in Indian Country to include homicide, aggravated assault, child sexual assault, kidnapping and rape. I have been with the FBI for approximately three years. I received on the job training from other experienced agents, detectives, Indian Country criminal investigators, and tribal police officers. My investigative training and experience include, but is not limited to, processing crime scenes, conducting surveillance, interviewing subjects and witnesses, writing affidavits for executing search warrants and arrest warrants, examining cellular telephones, managing confidential human sources and cooperating witnesses/defendants, serving subpoenas, collecting evidence and analyzing public records.

3. This affidavit is based upon information reported to me by other federal, state, tribal and local law enforcement officers during the course of their official duties. Throughout this affidavit, reference will be made to law enforcement officers. Law enforcement officers are

those federal, state, and local law enforcement officers who have directly participated in this investigation.

4. Based on my training, experience, and the facts set forth in this affidavit, there is probable cause to believe that LOVATO violated federal criminal statutes 21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(B)(vi), that being possession with intent to distribute 40 grams and more of fentanyl (N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl)-4-piperidinyl] propanamide), 18 U.S.C. §§ 922(g)(1) and 924, that being felon in possession of a firearm, and 18 U.S.C. § 924(c)(1)(A)(i), that being possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.

5. Because this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of securing authorization for a Criminal Complaint and Arrest Warrant, I have not included each and every fact known to me concerning this investigation. I have set forth facts that I believe are sufficient to establish probable cause to obtain the requested warrant.

FACTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES ESTABLISHING PROBABLE CAUSE

6. The United States, including the FBI, is conducting a criminal investigation, jointly with Region II Narcotics Task Force located in San Juan County, New Mexico of LOVATO regarding possible federal violations of 21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(B)(vi), that being possession with intent to distribute 40 grams and more of fentanyl (N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl)-4-piperidinyl] propanamide), 18 U.S.C. §§ 922(g)(1) and 924, that being felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition, and 18 U.S.C. § 924(c)(1)(A)(i), that being possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.

7. LOVATO is suspected of being a part of a Drug Trafficking Organization (DTO) as well as illegally trafficking firearms. Upon reviewing the New Mexico online secure court case information and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), LOVATO has sustained two (2) felony convictions which prevent him from possessing a firearm, including:

- a. Fraudulent Use of a Credit Card Without Consent of Cardholder (From \$500 - \$2,500) and Conspiracy to Commit Fraudulent Use of Credit Card Without Consent (From \$500 - \$2,500), on October 1, 2011, in Second Judicial District Court in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Case No. D-202-CR-201201581; and
- b. Possession of a Controlled Substance – Dangerous Drugs, on July 3, 2012, Durango, Colorado.

8. Additionally, LOVATO had an active warrant for his arrest for Possession of a Controlled substance (Felony) and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, on August 16, 2025, in Aztec Magistrate Court, Case No. M-147-FR-202500368.

9. On January 26, 2026, the Region II Narcotics Task Force suspected that LOVATO was bringing large quantities of narcotics and firearms into San Juan County from the Albuquerque area.

10. On January 26, 2026, a traffic stop on a 2010 white Chevrolet Silverado truck (NM Plate – 953SBC) was conducted by a San Juan County Sheriff Deputy northbound on US Highway 550 returning to San Juan County. LOVATO was identified as the driver and two other males were present inside the vehicle.

11. During the stop, LOVATO and the two males were detained. LOVATO was arrested on his active arrest warrant for Possession of a Controlled substance (Felony) and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, on August 16, 2025, in Aztec Magistrate Court, Case No. M-147-FR-202500368, mentioned above. At the time of LOVATO's arrest, one hollow point 9mm round, a small clear bag of methamphetamine weighing approximately 1.34 grams, and two iPhone cellphones were seized from his person.

12. After LOVATO and the two males were clear of the vehicle, Farmington Police Department K9 performed a free air scent pass of the vehicle with their Police Service Dog

(PSD). Per the Farmington Police Department K9, the PSD alerted to the presence of the odor of controlled substances emitting from the 2010 white Chevrolet Silverado truck (NM Plate – 953SBC). The 2010 white Chevrolet Silverado truck was sealed and towed to the Farmington Police Department impound lot pending approval for a search warrant.

13. On January 27, 2026, the Eleventh Judicial District Court of New Mexico issued a search warrant for the 2010 white Chevrolet Silverado truck (Case No. 26-5992) to allow the seizure of controlled substances, firearms, and evidence of controlled substance trafficking.

14. Region II Narcotics Task Force Agents executed the search warrant on the 2010 white Chevrolet Silverado truck that LOVATO was driving at the time of his arrest on January 26, 2026.

15. At the conclusion of the execution of the search warrant on the 2010 white Chevrolet Silverado truck, approximately 18 grams of fentanyl powder, more than 400 fentanyl pills, and one Glock 26 firearm were seized.

16. In the area between the driver's seat and the center console, Region II Narcotics Task Force Agents located the Glock 26 firearm with a seated magazine containing 14 9mm rounds, two of these rounds matched the round seized from LOVATO's person at the time of his arrest. Additionally, a plastic bag with 15 fentanyl pills was also seized. In my training and experience, Glock firearms are not manufactured in New Mexico and must travel through interstate commerce. Also, the ammunition described above was not manufactured in New Mexico and must have therefore traveled in interstate commerce.

17. In the driver's side backseat floorboard in a grocery bag, the fentanyl powder and fentanyl pills and one iPhone lightning cable charger were located. Of the four cellphones seized from the occupants of the vehicle, LOVATO was the only individual with an iPhone.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

18. The suspected illicit fentanyl pills were all consistent with the size, shape and stamping of “M” and “30” associated with the appearance of illicit fentanyl pills.

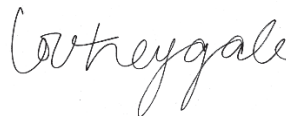
19. The suspected fentanyl powder was NIK tested and came back as presumptive positive for fentanyl.

20. In my training and experience, approximately 18 grams of illicit fentanyl powder and more than 400 fentanyl pills are consistent with distribution rather than possession amounts. Based on my training and experience, I also know that firearms are a tool of the drug trade; firearms protect a drug dealer, his illicit proceeds, and his drugs from anyone who may want to rob him.

CONCLUSION

21. Based on my training, experience, and the facts as set forth in this affidavit, your affiant submits there is probable cause to believe LOVATO violated federal criminal statutes 21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(B)(vi), that being possession with intent to distribute 40 grams and more of fentanyl (N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl)-4-piperidinyl] propanamide), 18 U.S.C. §§ 922(g)(1) and 924, that being felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition, and 18 U.S.C. § 924(c)(1)(A)(i), that being possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.

Electronically SUBSCRIBED and telephonically SWORN to me on January 28, 2026.



Courtney S. Gale
Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Subscribed and sworn telephonically before me on January 28, 2026.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Yarbrough", written over a horizontal line.

The Honorable Steven C. Yarbrough
United States Magistrate Judge