

AO 91 (Rev. 11/11) Criminal Complaint

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

District of New Mexico

United States of America

v.

David Joe De La Paz

Case No.

26mj 454

Defendant(s)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

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

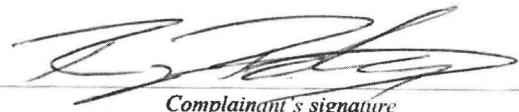
On or about the date(s) of February 5, 2026 in the county of Dona Ana in the District of New Mexico, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section	Offense Description
18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(3)	Possession of a firearm by an unlawful user of a controlled substance
21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(C)	Possession of a controlled substance with the intent to distribute (cocaine)
18 U.S.C. § 924(c)	Possession of a firearm in furtherance of drug trafficking

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See attached "Affidavit"

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.



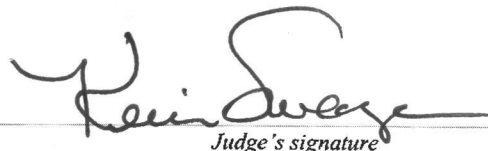
Complainant's signature

Ryan Buckrop, FBI Special Agent

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: 02-06-2026



Judge's signature

City and state: Las Cruces, New Mexico

Kevin R. Swezea, U.S. Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF A CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

1. This affidavit is made in support of a criminal complaint charging David Joe De La Paz (De La Paz), with violations of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1), (b)(1)(C), possession with the intent to distribute a controlled substance (cocaine); 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(3), possession of a firearm by an unlawful user of a controlled substance; and 18 U.S.C. § 924(c), possession of a firearm in furtherance of drug trafficking.

2. I am a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Special Agent currently assigned to the FBI Albuquerque Division, Las Cruces Resident Agency. I have been an FBI Special Agent since August 2016. Since May 2017, I have been assigned to the FBI Southern New Mexico Safe Streets Gang Task Force (SSGTF) where I currently serve as Task Force Coordinator. In that capacity, I oversee the day-to-day operations of the SSGTF and conduct investigations of criminal organizations, violent repeat offenders, and other federal drug and firearm related crimes. As an FBI Special Agent, I am authorized to investigate crimes involving violations of the Controlled Substances Act and Firearms Act.

3. I am familiar with the facts and circumstances of the investigation of De La Paz. The information set forth in this affidavit has been derived from my own investigation or communicated to me by other sworn law enforcement officers or reliable sources. Since this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of securing an arrest warrant, I have not included each and every fact known to me concerning this investigation. I have set forth only the facts that I believe are necessary to establish probable cause to believe that De La Paz has violated 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1), (b)(1)(C), 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(3), 18 U.S.C. § 924(c).

4. Beginning in late 2025, the FBI SSGTF and Las Cruces/Dona Ana County Metro Narcotics (Metro Narcotics) began investigating De La Paz and other members of a drug trafficking organization (DTO) involved in drug trafficking, the illegal possession of firearms, and other illegal activity in Las Cruces, New Mexico (NM), and elsewhere in Dona Ana County, NM. On February 3, 2026, a federal search warrant was obtained for De La Paz's residence located at 3312 West Street, Las Cruces, NM, and the person of De La Paz.

5. On February 5, 2026, Special Agents and Task Force Officers (TFOs) of the FBI and agents from Metro Narcotics executed the search warrant for the property located at 3312 West Street, Las Cruces, NM. The FBI Albuquerque SWAT team assisted with the initial execution of the search warrant. During the initial execution of the search warrant, De La Paz was observed by me and other SWAT operators standing in his bedroom next to his bed and bedside table. While clearing the bedroom, SWAT operators observed an AR-15 style rifle on the bed directly next to De La Paz.

5. During the search of the residence, FBI special agents and TFOs located multiple firearms. Most of the firearms were in De La Paz's bedroom and a locked safe located in De La Paz's bedroom closet. The AR-15 style rifle was identified as a Spikes Tactical Model ST15 rifle, 5.56x45mm caliber. The rifle was loaded with a full magazine and a round in the chamber. Also, located under the pillow on the bed directly next to De La Paz was a Glock handgun, 9mm caliber. The handgun was loaded with a full magazine with a round in the chamber and a spare loaded magazine was located on the bedside table next to De La Paz. Inside of the drawers of the bedside table were multiple drug use paraphernalia items including a glass pipe with drug residue and foil with burnt drug residue (suspected fentanyl). A field test of the suspected fentanyl resulted in a presumptive positive test for fentanyl. Located near the foot of the bed was a white case containing

additional drug use paraphernalia items including syringes, a metallic spoon with drug residue, rubber tourniquets, alcohol swabs, and a lighter. Also located in the white case was tinfoil containing a white crystalline substance (suspected methamphetamine). The suspected methamphetamine was field tested and did test presumptively positive for the presence of methamphetamine.

6. During the search of the residence, a locked firearm safe was located in De La Paz's bedroom closet. Agents requested the combination to the safe from De La Paz and De La Paz voluntarily provided the combination to the firearm safe. Located in the safe was a container with a plastic bag containing a white powdery substance (suspected cocaine). Also located in the safe was a plate with lines of a loose white powdery substance (suspected cocaine), a vial, and a New Mexico identification card with De La Paz's name on it which I believe is indicative of drug use. The suspected cocaine was field tested and did test presumptively positive for the presence of cocaine. Next to the plastic bag of suspected cocaine in the safe was a scale consistent with drug trafficking. Also located in the safe directly next to the suspected cocaine was a Springfield Armory 1911 Operator handgun, .45 ACP caliber, which had a fully loaded magazine and a round in the chamber. The other firearms which were also located in the safe include: a Smith and Wesson SW40VE, .40 S&W caliber; a Ruger New Vaquero revolver, .357 Mag caliber, fully loaded with six rounds of .357 Mag caliber ammunition; and a Ruger Scout bolt action rifle, .308 Win caliber. Lastly, there was also approximately \$1,000 in U.S. currency in the safe. Located in the closet but outside of the safe was a CZ USA over/under shotgun, 12 gauge.

7. The total suspected cocaine located in De La Paz's safe was later weighed and had a gross weight of 30.0 grams. The suspected cocaine was field tested and did test presumptively positive for the presence of cocaine. Based on my training and experience and conversations with

trained Metro Narcotics agents, I believe that the amount of suspected cocaine that was seized by agents from De La Paz's safe is a quantity of cocaine consistent with that possessed for the purpose of distribution.

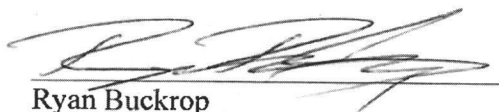
8. Based on my training and experience and my own independent research, it is my understanding that none of the aforementioned firearms that De La Paz possessed are manufactured in the state of New Mexico. Specifically, based on open-source information, it appears that Spikes Tactical firearms are manufactured in the state of Florida, Glock firearms are manufactured in the country of Austria or the state of Georgia, Ruger firearms are manufactured in the states of Arizona, Connecticut, or New Hampshire, and Springfield Armory firearms are manufactured in the state of Illinois. Therefore, the firearms that De La Paz was in possession of had traveled in interstate commerce in order to be present in the state of New Mexico.

9. Further, I know, based on my training and experience, that drug traffickers often possess firearms in order to protect themselves, their narcotics, and/or their proceeds.

10. Based on the foregoing, there is probable cause to believe that David Joe De La Paz committed violations of 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(3), Possession of a firearm by an unlawful user of a controlled substance, 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1), (b)(1)(C), Possession with the intent to distribute a controlled substance (cocaine), and 18 U.S.C. § 924(c), Possession of a firearm in furtherance of drug trafficking.

11. Assistant United States Attorney Devon Aragon Martinez approved the charges filed in this criminal complaint.

DATED: 02/05/26


Ryan Buckrop
Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

26-454MJ

Electronically signed and telephonically
sworn this 6 day of February, 2026.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Sweazea", is written over a horizontal line.

Kevin R. Sweazea

UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE