

For Immediate Release
July 20, 2011

**ALBUQUERQUE MAN SENTENCED TO SIX-MONTHS IMPRISONMENT
FOR MANIPULATING URINE TEST FOR CRIMINAL DEFENDANT**

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning in Albuquerque federal court, Albuquerque resident **Ronald Lopez**, 45, was sentenced to six-months of imprisonment for violating federal law that prohibits obstructive conduct intended unlawfully to affect the presentation of evidence in federal proceedings. More specifically, Lopez helped a criminal defendant cheat on a urinalysis test and thus prevented the U.S. Probation Department from reporting a possible violation of supervision to the federal court. After he completes his prison sentence, Lopez will be on supervised release for two years, including six-months of home confinement. Lopez, who has been on release under pretrial supervision since his arrest on July 19, 2010, is required to surrender to a federal correctional facility to be designated by the U.S. Bureau of Prisons within 60 days.

Lopez is a former employee of Relevancy, Inc. (Relevancy), a company that assists U.S. Probation with drug testing of criminal defendants. According to court records, Relevancy collected urine samples for drug testing from criminal defendants who were supervised by U.S. Probation and were required by court order to undergo drug testing as a condition of their supervision. Under its contract with U.S. Probation, Relevancy was required accurately and honestly to label the urine samples with the names of criminal defendants providing the samples and then to transfer the properly labeled samples to the U.S. Probation laboratory where the samples were analyzed. With the expectation that urine samples were properly labeled, U.S. Probation routinely relied on the results of drug testing on the urine samples it received from Relevancy to prepare reports on criminal defendants that it submitted to federal judges, and the

federal judges relied on the reports to determine whether criminal defendants had violated the conditions of their supervision.

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Lopez was arrested on an indictment that charged him with two counts of permitting criminal defendants to bring in substitute samples instead of providing their own urine samples for the drug tests. Lopez entered a guilty plea to count 1 of the indictment on April 11, 2011 under a plea agreement with the United States Attorney's Office. At the conclusion of today's sentencing hearing, the court dismissed count 2 of the indictment.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Joel R. Meyers.

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