

42-year old New Bedford man pleads guilty to Fentanyl conspiracy

“A New Bedford man pleaded guilty today to his role in a drug trafficking organization (DTO) operating in Southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Jason Cruz, 42, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute and to possess with intent to distribute fentanyl. U.S. District Court Judge Allison D. Burroughs scheduled sentencing for July 25, 2023. Cruz was indicted by a federal grand jury in August 2022 and has remained in custody since.

Between approximately April 2022 and approximately June 2022, Cruz purchased fentanyl from the DTO that he then redistributed to others. Intercepted communications depicted Cruz discussing purchasing fentanyl from the DTO. In addition, surveillance footage showed other members of the DTO visiting the Cruz’s residence for brief periods of times, which is consistent with illegal drug trafficking.

The charge of conspiracy to distribute and to possess with intent to distribute fentanyl provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, at least three years and up to a lifetime of supervised release and a fine of up to \$1 million. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins; Brian D. Boyle, Special Agent in Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration, New England Field Division; New Bedford Police Chief Paul Oliveira; and Fairhaven Police Chief Michael J. Myers made the announcement today. Special assistance was provided by the Massachusetts State Police; Homeland Security

Investigations; Bristol County Sherriff's Office; and Fall River, Taunton, Attleboro, Scituate, Yarmouth, Providence (R.I.) and West Warwick (R.I.) Police Departments. Assistant U.S. Attorney John T. Mulcahy of Rollins' Narcotics & Money Laundering Unit is prosecuting the case.

This effort is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) operation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF Program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>."-Massachusetts Department of Justice.