

# Man arrested for assaulting FBI Agents, hoarding enough medical supplies to outfit an entire hospital

A Brooklyn man was arrested yesterday for allegedly coughing on FBI agents while claiming to have COVID-19, and with lying to them about his accumulation and sale of surgical masks, medical gowns, and other medical supplies, U.S. Attorney Craig Carpenito announced.

Baruch Feldheim, 43, was arrested by special agents of the FBI today and charged by complaint with assaulting a federal officer and with making false statements to law enforcement. Feldheim is scheduled to have his initial appearance this afternoon before U.S. Magistrate Judge Michael A. Hammer in Newark federal court.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court:

On March 25, 2020, the Department of Health and Human Services issued an executive order designating certain scarce health and medical resources necessary to respond to the spread of the Coronavirus. Those designated materials included N95 filtering face-piece respirators, personal protection equipment (PPE) face masks, surgical masks, sterilization services, and disinfecting devices, among other things.

Feldheim allegedly sold certain designated materials, including N95 respirators, to doctors and nurses at inflated prices. In one instance, on March 18, 2020, a doctor in New Jersey contacted Feldheim via a WhatsApp chat group labeled "Virus2020!" Feldheim agreed to sell to the doctor approximately 1,000 N95 masks and other assorted materials for

\$12,000, an approximately 700 percent markup from the normal price charged for those materials. Feldheim directed the doctor to an auto repair shop in Irvington, New Jersey, to pick up the order. According to the doctor, the repair shop contained enough materials, including hand sanitizers, Clorox wipes, chemical cleaning supply agents, and surgical supplies, to outfit an entire hospital. Feldheim later told the doctor that he had been forced to move all of those supplies from Irvington to another location.

On March 23, 2020, Feldheim allegedly offered to sell a nurse a quantity of surgical gowns and directed the nurse to his residence in Brooklyn. Feldheim also received, on March 25, 2020, a shipment from Canada containing approximately eight pallets of medical facemasks. On March 27, 2020, FBI agents observed an empty box of N95 masks outside of Feldheim's residence.

On March 29, 2020, FBI agents witnessed multiple instances during which individuals approached Feldheim's residence and walked away with boxes or bags that appeared to contain medical supplies. On that date, FBI agents approached Feldheim outside of his residence. After identifying themselves as FBI agents, they told Feldheim that they wanted to stay a distance away from him given concerns over the spread of Coronavirus. When the agents were within four to five feet of him, Feldheim allegedly coughed in their direction without covering his mouth. The agents then told him that they were looking for certain PPE materials and that they had information that Feldheim was in possession of large quantities of such materials. At that point, Feldheim told the FBI agents that that he had the Coronavirus.

Feldheim then made false statements to the FBI agents regarding his possession and sale of personal protective equipment and other materials. He falsely told the agents, among other things, that he worked for a company that bought and sold personal protective equipment and other materials and

that he never took physical custody of the materials. Feldheim further falsely stated that he did not possess large quantities of personal protective equipment materials and that he never sold them directly to individuals.

The assault charge carries a maximum penalty of one year in prison and a \$100,000 fine. The false statements charge carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

The supplies have been **distributed to hospitals**.

Please report COVID-19 fraud, hoarding, or price-gouging to the National Center for Disaster Fraud's National Hotline at (866) 720-5721 or e-mail [disaster@leo.gov](mailto:disaster@leo.gov).

U.S. Attorney Carpenito credited special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Gregory W. Ehrie in Newark, with the investigation leading to today's arrest.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jonathan Fayer of the Economic Crimes Unit.

The charges and allegations contained in the complaint are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.