



Department of Justice

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District of Oregon

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THREE OREGON MEN SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON FOR ILLEGAL FIREARM POSSESSION

PORTLAND, Ore.—In separate criminal cases, three men, Mitch Bryan Schoonover, 37, of Portland; Isaiah Holt, 32, also of Portland; and Jay Rodney Ferdig, 44, of Salem, Oregon; were sentenced this week to federal prison for illegally possessing firearms as convicted felons, announced U.S. Attorney Billy J. Williams.

“The goal of the Project Safe Neighborhoods program is to reduce violent crime and victimization across Oregon,” said U.S. Attorney Williams. “A key pillar of our strategy is to reduce illegal gun ownership. With the assistance of our federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement partners, we have made significant progress toward this goal.”

U.S. v. Schoonover

On July 6, 2020, Schoonover was sentenced to 18 months in prison and three years’ supervised release. According to court documents, on January 1, 2020, Gresham Police officers stopped Schoonover for a traffic violation and on suspicion that the vehicle he was driving was stolen. Officers searched the vehicle after confirming it was stolen and found a .45 caliber semiautomatic pistol, a loaded magazine, and a clear glass pipe containing methamphetamine residue.

In 2005, after learning that another man had spent the night with his girlfriend, Schoonover shot and killed the man at short range with a rifle. He was convicted in Multnomah County Circuit Court of first degree manslaughter and sentenced to 15 years in state prison.

This case was investigated by the Gresham Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). It was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Lewis S. Burkhart.

U.S. v. Ferdig

Ferdig was sentenced today to 30 months in prison and three years’ supervised release. According to court documents, on August 2, 2019, Ferdig and his fiancée were staying at a

Salem motel with their 11-month- and three-year-old children. They left both children in the care of an extremely intoxicated cousin and went to a local park to inject methamphetamine. The children wandered away and a motel guest brought both children inside for their protection and to prevent the three-year-old from running into the street. During a subsequent welfare check, police discovered the children were barefoot and had not had their diapers changed for hours. Ferdig and his fiancée were arrested upon their return to the motel.

Police discovered drug packaging on Ferdig's person and a .22 caliber pistol with a round in the chamber, two boxes of ammunition, plastic bags with shards of methamphetamine, two digital scales, hypodermic needles, and a stun gun in his vehicle.

Ferdig's criminal history spans more than two decades. He is prohibited from possessing a firearm after numerous felony convictions for assault, sex offenses, drug offenses, robbery, burglary, and other crimes.

This case was investigated by the Salem Police Department and prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Byron G. Chatfield.

U.S. v. Holt

Holt was sentenced today to 37 months in prison and three years' supervised release for money laundering, drug trafficking, and illegally possessing a firearm as a convicted felon. According to court documents, beginning in July 2016 and continuing until his arrest in April 2018, Holt used his association with a licensed marijuana producer in Portland to divert state-legal marijuana into the black market. Holt sold marijuana in-person to out-of-state customers traveling to Oregon and by mail to remote customers using the U.S. Postal Service.

The investigation started when Holt directed his girlfriend to purchase a handgun for him. In April 2018, ATF agents obtained and executed a search warrant on Holt's Northeast Portland residence. They found 11.5 grams of cocaine and nearly \$2,000 in cash on Holt's person and three firearms, drug packaging materials, shipping labels, 14 pounds of marijuana, and \$46,100 in cash in the residence.

After his arrest and [federal indictment](#), Holt continued to distribute cocaine. From April to August 2019, law enforcement conducted three controlled purchases of cocaine from Holt. In total, law enforcement purchased or recovered from Holt approximately 158 grams of cocaine during these purchases.

Holt is prohibited from possessing a firearm after several felony convictions in Multnomah County Circuit Court in 2007 for selling marijuana and shooting an individual during an altercation.

This case was investigated by ATF, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Portland Police Bureau. It was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Julia E. Jarrett and Leah K. Bolstad.

These cases were brought as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN). PSN is the centerpiece of the Department of Justice's violent crime reduction efforts. PSN is an evidence-based program proven to be effective at reducing violent crime. Through PSN, a broad spectrum of stakeholders work together to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in the community and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. As part of this strategy, PSN focuses enforcement efforts on the most violent offenders and partners with locally based prevention and reentry programs for lasting reductions in crime.

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