



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **12 INDICTED IN HEROIN AND COCAINE DISTRIBUTION RING OPERATING IN PATERSON, NEW JERSEY**

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PATERSON, NEW JERSEY:

APRIL 12, 2011

Passaic County Prosecutor Camelia M. Valdes announces on Tuesday, April 12, 2011, the Passaic County Grand Jury returned a fifty-five count indictment against Ronald Carasquillo, Rafael Perez, Ronnie G. Fontanez, Henry Ventura-Hernandez and eight other individuals who participated in a heroin and cocaine distribution ring that operated in the area of Keen Street in Paterson, New Jersey. The indictment charges Ronald Carasquillo, age 41, of Clifton, New Jersey; Rafael Perez, age 57, of Paterson, New Jersey and Ronnie G. Fontanez, age 31, of Paterson, New Jersey with numerous narcotics related offenses, including 1<sup>st</sup> degree Leaders of a Narcotics Trafficking Network, 2<sup>nd</sup> degree Conspiracy to Distribute heroin and 2<sup>nd</sup> degree Conspiracy to Distribute cocaine. Henry Ventura-Hernandez, who is alleged to be the supplier of narcotics to Ronald Carasquillo and Rafael Perez, was also charged in the indictment with 2<sup>nd</sup> degree Conspiracy to Distribute heroin, 2<sup>nd</sup> degree Conspiracy to Distribute cocaine and Possession of heroin with Intent to Distribute within 1000 feet of school property.

The charges in the indictment stem from a joint investigation during the months of July, August, September and October 2010 between the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office Narcotics, Gangs and Violent Crimes Task Force and the Paterson Police Department, which revealed that Ronald Carasquillo, Rafael Perez, Ronnie G. Fontanez and a number of others were distributing heroin and cocaine in the area of 126-128 Keen Street in Paterson. The drug ring used "runners" to distribute narcotics in the area of Keen Street in Paterson. The investigation also revealed that Henry Ventura-Hernandez was Ronald Carasquillo's and Rafael Perez's supplier and that he conspired with them to distribute amounts of heroin and cocaine.

As a result of search warrants which were executed on October 2, 2010 at various residences located in the City of Paterson, law enforcement officials recovered a quantity of heroin and crack cocaine in the areas of 126-128 Keen Street and 117 Keen Street, one handgun that was loaded with hollow point bullets at 10-28 Courtland Street, Apartment #200, Paterson,

New Jersey, a quantity of heroin along with narcotics paraphernalia at 102 Beech Street, Paterson, New Jersey and approximately \$8,000.00.

Ronald Carasquillo was charged in eleven counts of the indictment; the most serious offense being Leader of a Narcotics Trafficking Network in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C: 35-3. If convicted, he could face a maximum sentence of life imprisonment during which he must serve twenty-five years before being eligible for parole. He was also charged with two counts of Conspiracy to Distribute a Controlled Dangerous Substance (heroin and cocaine) in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C: 35-5(b) (1)/2C: 5-2. If convicted, he could face between five and ten years in New Jersey State Prison. Lastly, he was charged with two counts of Possession of a Controlled Dangerous Substance with Intent to Distribute within 1000 feet of school property and one count of Distribution of a Controlled Dangerous Substance within 1000 feet of school property in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C: 35-7. If convicted, he could face a maximum of up to five years in prison with up to three years before parole eligibility.

Rafael Perez was charged in twelve counts of the indictment; the most serious offense being Leader of a Narcotics Trafficking Network in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C: 35-3. If convicted, he could face a maximum sentence of life imprisonment during which he must serve twenty-five years before being eligible for parole. He was also charged with two counts of Conspiracy to Distribute a Controlled Dangerous Substance (heroin and cocaine) in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C: 35-5(b) (1)/ 2C: 5-2. If convicted, he could face between five and ten years in New Jersey State Prison. Lastly, he was also charged with the second degree offenses of Unlawful Possession of a Weapon and Certain Persons not to have a Weapon in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C: 39-5 (b) and N.J.S.A. 2C: 39-7, respectively. If convicted of the Unlawful Possession of Weapon, he could face a maximum of up to ten years in prison and if convicted of the Certain Persons not to have a Weapon offense, he could face a maximum of up to ten years in prison during which he must serve five years before being eligible for parole.

Ronnie G. Fontanez was charged in fifteen counts of the indictment; the most serious offense being Leader of a Narcotics Trafficking Network in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C: 35-3. If convicted, he could face a maximum sentence of life imprisonment during which he must serve twenty-five years before being eligible for parole. He was also charged with one count of Conspiracy to Distribute a Controlled Dangerous Substance (heroin) in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C: 35-5 (b) (1)/ 2C: 5-2. If convicted, he could face between five and ten years in New Jersey State Prison. Lastly, he was charged with three counts of Distribution of a Controlled Dangerous Substance within 1000 feet of school property and two counts of Possession of a Controlled Dangerous Substance with Intent to Distribute within 1000 feet of school property in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C: 35-7. If convicted, he could face a maximum of up to five years in prison with up to three years before being eligible for parole.

Henry Ventura-Hernandez was charged in six counts of the indictment; the most serious offense being Conspiracy to Distribute a Controlled Dangerous Substance (heroin and cocaine) in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C: 35-5(b)(1)/2C: 5-2. If convicted, he could face between five and ten years in New Jersey State Prison. He was also charged with one count of Possession of a Controlled Dangerous Substance with Intent to Distribute within 1000 feet of school property in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C: 35-7. If convicted, he could face a maximum of up to five years in prison with up to three years before being eligible for parole.

Also, the following individuals were indicted for either conspiracy to distribute, distribution or possession of controlled dangerous substances:

Jamar Crawford, age 26 of Paterson  
Anthony Ferreira, age 24 of Paterson  
Richard Garcia, age 33 of Paterson  
Andrew Kirk, age 26 of Hawthorne  
Shane Mahi, age 24 of Franklin Lakes  
Adam Runckel, age 28 of Morris Plains  
Fanny Singer, age 50 of Paterson  
Alexander Torres, age 38 of Paterson

The arraignment of the twelve defendants on the charges contained in the indictment shall occur within the next four to six weeks in Passaic County Superior Court.

For further information or questions please contact Senior Assistant Prosecutor Laura Tencza at (973) 837-7704 or [LTencza@passaiccountynj.org](mailto:LTencza@passaiccountynj.org)

The charges against the twelve defendants are merely allegations and they are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.