

ALBUQUERQUE – Moises Jimenez-Salas, 40, a Mexican national illegally in the United States who previously has been deported three times, was sentenced Jan. 25 in federal court in Santa Fe, to 60 months of imprisonment for his conviction on drug trafficking and firearms charges. Jimenez-Salas will be deported following his prison sentence.

Jimenez-Salas was arrested on May 12, 2016, and was charged in a criminal complaint with possessing methamphetamine and heroin with intent to distribute, and using and carrying a firearm and ammunition in relation to a drug trafficking crime.

Court records reflect that on May 11, 2016, detectives of the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office responded to a motel at Coors Boulevard NW and Interstate 40 in Albuquerque after receiving a tip about drug trafficking activity occurring at the motel.

At the motel, the detectives observed Jimenez-Salas carrying a cardboard box that contained 463 grams of methamphetamine and 16 grams of heroin. During a search incident to arrest, the detectives found a bag containing 21 grams of methamphetamine in Jimenez-Salas' pocket and a firearm and ammunition on his waistband.

Jimenez-Salas subsequently was charged in a four-count indictment on May 25, 2016. The indictment charged Jimenez-Salas with being an alien illegally in possession of a firearm and ammunition, possessing heroin and methamphetamine with intent to distribute, and using and carrying a firearm in relation to a drug trafficking crime. T

he indictment alleged that Jimenez-Salas committed the crimes on May 11, 2016, in Bernalillo County.

On June 27, 2017, Jimenez-Salas pled guilty to possession of heroin with intent to distribute, and using and carrying a firearm in relation to a drug trafficking crime.

In his plea agreement, Jimenez-Salas admitted that on May 11, 2016, he was in possession of

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a firearm and ammunition, approximately 484 grams of methamphetamine and 16 grams of heroin when he encountered BCSO officers outside of an Albuquerque-area motel. Jimenez-Salas further admitted that he possessed the firearm and ammunition as tools of the drug trafficking trade.

This case was investigated by the Albuquerque office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and BCSO and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rumaldo R. Armijo as part of the New Mexico Heroin and Opioid Prevention and Education (HOPE) Initiative.

The HOPE Initiative was launched in January 2015 by the UNM Health Sciences Center and the U.S. Attorney's Office in response to the national opioid epidemic, which has had a disproportionately devastating impact on New Mexico.

Opioid addiction has taken a toll on public safety, public health and the economic viability of our communities. Working in partnership with the DEA, the Bernalillo County Opioid Accountability Initiative, Healing Addiction in our Community, the Albuquerque Public Schools and other community stakeholders, HOPE's principal goals are to protect our communities from the dangers associated with heroin and opioid painkillers and reducing the number of opioid-related deaths in New Mexico.

This case is also being prosecuted under a federal anti-violence initiative that targets "the worst of the worst" offenders for federal prosecution.

Under this initiative, the U.S. Attorney's Office and federal law enforcement agencies work with New Mexico's District Attorneys and state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies to target violent or repeat offenders primarily based on their prior criminal convictions for federal prosecution with the goal of removing repeat offenders from communities in New Mexico for as long as possible.