



POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY OF BURLINGTON

MEDIA RELEASE

Please see the attached press release from the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Vermont.

In early 2022, the Burlington Police Department Drug Unit opened an investigation into a male, later identified as Melvin Hill, distributing suspected fentanyl in the Burlington area. Two controlled purchases of fentanyl were completed utilizing a BPD confidential source. The BPD Drug Unit and Emergency Response Unit teamed with members of the Drug Enforcement Administration to devise a plan to safely take Hill into custody while minimizing the risk to the general public, Hill, and the officers on scene. Hill was taken into custody without issue and was found to have a loaded firearm and "crack" cocaine on his person. Subsequent searches of Hill's hotel room, vehicle, and storage unit revealed large quantities of fentanyl, a second pistol, and approximately one pound of pure methamphetamine, among other items.

Sergeant Phil Tremblay of the BPD's Detective Services Bureau added, "This a great example of a case that started with our BPD Drug Unit and gained momentum with our partnerships with DEA and the U.S. Attorney's Office."

The Burlington Police Department is extremely grateful for the United States Attorney Office's partnership. We are also grateful for the partnership of the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. A tremendous amount of work was done and we are continuously thankful to our partners for this collaboration.

Information is preliminary and subject to change.

ANTONIO B. POMERLEAU BUILDING • ONE NORTH AVENUE • BURLINGTON, VT 05401



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THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT of JUSTICE

United States Attorney's Office
District of Vermont

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 10, 2024
[@USAO_VT](https://justice.gov/usao-vt)

United States Courthouse and Federal Building
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Melvin Hill Sentenced on Federal Drug And Firearms Charges

Rutland, Vermont – The United States Attorney for the District of Vermont announced that Melvin Hill, 45, who formerly lived in Tignall, Georgia, was sentenced today in U.S. District Court in Rutland following his trial conviction on five drug and gun charges. Chief U.S. District Judge Geoffrey Crawford sentenced Hill to 180 months of imprisonment, to be followed by a ten-year term of supervised release. Hill has been held without bail since his arrest in March 2022.

According to court records, in January 2022, a confidential source told Burlington narcotics investigators that they could buy narcotics from Hill. In February and March, this source made two controlled purchases of fentanyl from Hill in transactions that were recorded and surveilled by police officers. Officers learned that Hill was staying at a hotel in South Burlington. They obtained a state-court warrant to search Hill's hotel room and the car he had been driving. Officers arrested Hill on March 10 and recovered a loaded pistol and crack cocaine from his person. In his car and hotel room, officers seized hundreds of folds of fentanyl, hundreds of pills containing methamphetamine, and powder cocaine. They also found narcotics paraphernalia and approximately \$13,000 in cash.

The following day, March 11, state and federal agents searched a storage unit that Hill had rented in Burlington, Vermont. Inside, authorities found additional fentanyl, a second pistol and approximately one pound of pure methamphetamine.

In March 2022, the United States Attorney's office adopted Hill's case for federal prosecution. The U.S. Attorney's Office had successfully prosecuted Hill in an unrelated drug case in 2012.

In July 2022, a federal grand jury in Burlington charged Hill, in a superseding indictment, with two counts of distributing fentanyl to the confidential source; possessing with intent to distribute fentanyl, cocaine, cocaine base and large quantities of methamphetamine, and two counts of possessing firearms as a convicted felon. Hill is barred from possessing any firearms because he has several felony convictions in federal court and his native Georgia. A jury convicted Hill on all charges last summer.

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This case was investigated by the Burlington Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives assisting with firearms evidence.

At sentencing, Hill was represented by Karen Shingler, Esq. The government was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Gregory Waples and Zachary Stendig.

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