

PRESS RELEASE

H Block Gang Member Pleads Guilty to Drug Conspiracy

Thursday, December 18, 2025

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts

BOSTON – A member of the violent Boston-based gang, H-Block, pleaded guilty yesterday in federal court in Boston to drug conspiracy charges.

Eric Celestino, 31, of Boston, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute controlled substances. U.S. District Court Judge Leo T. Sorokin scheduled sentencing for March 18, 2026.

Celestino was one of 10 H-Block gang members and associates charged [in August 2024](#) following a multi-year investigation beginning in 2021 in response to an uptick in gang-related drug trafficking, shootings and violence. According to court documents, over 500 grams of cocaine, cocaine base (crack cocaine) and fentanyl, as well as over 20,000 doses of drug-laced paper were seized during the investigation.

Since the investigation began in 2021, law enforcement attributed 12 incidents of gunfire to growing tensions involving H Block gang associates. Six H Block members and associates were arrested and charged with drug dealing in Boston and surrounding communities. Four additional H Block members and associates were already in state custody at the time of the arrests. Additional drugs and four firearms were seized during the subsequent arrests.

From 2022 through 2023, Celestino, a long-time H Block gang member, participated in a conspiracy to distribute various controlled substances, in particular, powdered cocaine and cocaine base (crack). According to court filings, Celestino was a supplier of cocaine to his co-conspirators, who engaged in various drug deals with an undercover officer.

According to the charging documents, the H Block Street Gang is one of the most feared and influential city-wide gangs in Boston. Originally formed in the 1980s as the Humboldt Raiders in the Roxbury section of Boston, the gang re-emerged in the 2000s as H Block. Current members of H Block have a history of violent confrontation with law

enforcement, including an incident in 2015 when a member shot a Boston Police officer at point blank range without warning or provocation.

The charge of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute controlled substances provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, at least three years and up to life of supervised release and a fine of up to \$1 million. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

Celestino is the eighth defendant to plead guilty in the case.

United States Attorney Leah B. Foley; Jarod A. Forget, Special Agent in Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration, New England Field Division; Special Agent in Charge Randy Maloney of the U.S. Secret Service Boston Field Office; Ted E. Docks, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division; Jonathan Mellone, Special Agent in Charge of the Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; and Boston Police Commissioner Michael Cox made the announcement. The investigation was supported by the Massachusetts State Police; Suffolk County District Attorney's Office; Massachusetts Department of Corrections; and the Braintree, Quincy, Randolph, and Watertown Police Departments. Assistant United States Attorney John T. Dawley of the Organized Crime & Gang Unit and Jeremy Franker of the Justice Department's Violent Crime & Racketeering Section are prosecuting the cases.

This case is part of the Homeland Security Task Force (HSTF) initiative established by Executive Order 14159, Protecting the American People Against Invasion. The HSTF is a whole-of-government partnership dedicated to eliminating criminal cartels, foreign gangs, transnational criminal organizations, and human smuggling and trafficking rings operating in the United States and abroad. Through historic interagency collaboration, the HSTF directs the full might of United States law enforcement towards identifying, investigating, and prosecuting the full spectrum of crimes committed by these organizations, which have long fueled violence and instability within our borders. In performing this work, the HSTF places special emphasis on investigating and prosecuting those engaged in child trafficking or other crimes involving children. The HSTF further utilizes all available tools to prosecute and remove the most violent criminal aliens from the United States. HSTF Boston is comprised of agents and officers from HSI, FBI, DEA, ATF, USMS, IRS-CI, USPIS, DOL-OIG and DSS, as well as several state and local law enforcement agencies, with the prosecution being led by the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The remaining defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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Topic

DRUG TRAFFICKING

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