

PRESS RELEASE

Two Gang Members Sentenced to Life in Prison plus Ten Years For Murder-for-Hire, Firearms, and Fraud Convictions

Wednesday, June 17, 2026

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Wisconsin

Brad D. Schimel, First Assistant United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Wisconsin, announced today that United States District Judge J.P. Stadtmueller sentenced Lawrence Turner and Ronnell Bowman, both of Milwaukee to life in federal prison for conspiracy to commit murder for hire plus ten years consecutive imprisonment for using a firearm during a crime of violence.

A federal jury convicted Bowman and Turner of the murder and gun charges on March 5, 2026. Before trial, Bowman and Turner — both members of the Wild 100s street gang — also pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit mail fraud for submitting numerous fraudulent COVID-19 unemployment insurance claims involving multiple states. Bowman was responsible for theft of approximately \$863,844 in benefits. Turner stole approximately \$203,148.83. Both were sentenced on fraud-related charges to prison sentences to run concurrently with their life sentences.

Trial evidence proved Bowman paid Turner and another Wild 100s gang member \$10,000 each for the murder of N.B., who was ambushed and shot over two dozen times in the yard of his grandparents' home. Bowman had no direct dispute with N.B. but targeted him solely because he was a friend of someone against whom Bowman wanted revenge. Bowman was found to have paid for the murder with stolen COVID-19 unemployment benefit money. The second shooter previously pled guilty to his role in the murder and unemployment benefit fraud and is awaiting sentencing.

Trial evidence also established that Bowman conspired with others to violate federal firearms laws, including possessing machineguns, transferring firearms to felons, and possessing firearms as a felon. He was additionally convicted of attempting to intimidate, threaten, or corruptly persuade witnesses, as well as conspiring to obstruct justice and impede his jury trial for which he received concurrent prison sentences.

Before trial, Bowman and Turner each pleaded guilty to participating in a mail-fraud conspiracy to defraud the U.S. Department of Labor by submitting false applications for benefits under programs such as the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program and other state-administered unemployment insurance programs. In total, Bowman, Turner and twenty-eight other co-conspirators wrongfully obtained over \$10 million in federal unemployment benefits and used the proceeds to purchase firearms, controlled substances, jewelry, and vacations, and to solicit murder for hire. The defendants convicted of mail fraud conspiracy and other crimes are identified as follows:

Name	Date(s) of Conviction(s)
Ronnell Bowman	December 2, 2025 & March 5, 2026
Michael Anderson	November 8, 2023
Joel Blake	November 8, 2024
Byron Claypool	June 24, 2024
Cameron Cohen	October 30, 2024
Javonte Cotton	October 11, 2024
Ladarius Davis-Hughes	September 5, 2024
Terry Dean	Feb 26, 2024
Larry Echols	March 29, 2024
Demetrius Exum	October 28, 2025
Larry Hamilton	April 8, 2024

Vernell Hamilton	April 26, 2024
Romaine Hawthorne	July 18, 2024
Akeem Hudson	October 30, 2024
Ronnie Jackson	December 2, 2025
Calvin Kidd	March 20, 2024
Marcus Malbro	July 29, 2024
Deautris Mattison	July 29, 2024
Quevon McKinnie	October 11, 2024
Chase Nanez	October 16, 2024
Andrew Portis	November 20, 2024
Maurice Rittman	October 16, 2024
Ramon Savage	October 21, 2024
Timothy Scott	March 29, 2024
Keorie Smith	November 20, 2024
Kejuaun Thomas	October 30, 2024
Lawrence Turner	December 10, 2024 & March 5, 2026

Chazz White	July 18, 2024
Jalen Williams	April 8, 2024
Jaquan Wright	July 3, 2024

"This case vividly highlights the urgent need to combat fraud on our government programs," said Assistant Attorney General Colin M. McDonald of the Justice Department's National Fraud Enforcement Division. "This gang member stole taxpayer dollars and then used that money to purchase a murder. Thanks to the outstanding work of these prosecutors and their law enforcement partners, this dangerous individual is now off our streets and behind bars for the rest of his life."

"Our community will now be free from the terror inflicted by these violent gang members, and N.B.'s loved ones have finally received the justice for which they have been waiting for years," said First Assistant United States Attorney Schimel. "The senseless violence perpetrated by this gang was financed in large part by millions of dollars of fraud from a COVID-era benefits program. These convictions were made possible by the very strong collaboration between federal, state and local law enforcement partners. Since my appointment to the Office of the United States Attorney, I have been shocked by the enormous amount of fraud committed against the hard-working taxpayers of the United States uncovered by our law enforcement team. Taking down violent offenders and fraudsters will continue to be among our top priorities."

"The FBI is committed to aggressively investigating those who participate in violent criminal acts and those who steal from the American taxpayer. Ronnell Bowman and Lawrence Turner did both," said FBI Milwaukee Special Agent in Charge Alan Karr. "Bowman, Turner, and their co-conspirators stole from funds meant to help those who were unemployed and then spent the money on lavish items, drugs, and guns. The two then entered a conspiracy to have someone murdered out of revenge. This sentencing holds them to account for demonstrating the highest forms of greed and violence. The FBI, together with our law enforcement partners, remains dedicated to holding violent offenders and fraudsters accountable."

"This was a brutal case, and the violence at its center was as cruel as any we have seen," said Assistant Special Agent in Charge Spence Burnett, of the ATF St. Paul Field Division. "A young man was ambushed and killed in a place where he should have been safe, and

his family has carried that loss every day since. It took hard work and persistence to reach this day, and we are grateful to the ATF agents and our partners who saw it through. That family waited years for justice, and they were owed nothing less. ATF will continue to stand with our partners to hold violent offenders accountable."

"The sentencing of Ronnell Bowman delivers a strong message: we will not tolerate those who exploit programs intended to support unemployed American workers. My office is committed to ensuring fraudsters who prey on hardworking Americans face the full force of justice. I commend the United States Attorney's Office and our law enforcement partners for their relentless dedication throughout this investigation," said Anthony D'Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor.

"These convictions are another step closer to making our community safer for everyone to live, work and play," said Milwaukee Police Chief Jeffrey Norman. "I am proud of all the hard work of everyone involved in holding these violent individuals accountable."

Ronnell Bowman was tried and convicted by Assistant United States Attorneys Laura Kwaterski and Michael Schindhelm. The other members of the mail fraud conspiracy and firearms conspiracies were also prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Philip Kovoov and Peter Smyczek.

This case is part of Operation Take Back America, a nationwide initiative that marshals the full resources of the Department of Justice to repel the invasion of illegal immigration, achieve the total elimination of cartels and transnational criminal organizations (TCOs), and protect our communities from the perpetrators of violent crime. Operation Take Back America streamlines efforts and resources from the Department's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETFs) and Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN).

In addition, on April 7, the Department of Justice announced the creation of the National Fraud Enforcement Division ("Fraud Division"). The Fraud Division is investigating and prosecuting those who commit fraud against the American people. The Department's work to combat fraud supports President Trump's Task Force to Eliminate Fraud, a whole-of-government effort chaired by Vice President J.D. Vance to eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse within Federal benefit programs.

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Updated June 18, 2026