

AO 91 (Rev. 11/11) Criminal Complaint

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Eastern District of Kentucky

United States of America
v.

Laurance D. Newby
10/23/1987, 404-33-4550
IN CUSTODY FCDC

Case No.

5:25-MJ-5291-MAS

Defendant(s)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of June 25, 2025 in the county of Fayette in the Eastern District of Kentucky, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

21 U.S.C. Section 841(a)(1)

Offense Description

Possession with Intent to Distribute Cocaine and Fentanyl, both Schedule II Controlled Substances.

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See Attached Affidavit

Continued on the attached sheet.

/s/ Christine McHugh

Complainant's signature

DEA Special Agent, Christine McHugh

Printed name and title

Affiant attested by reliable electronic means (telephone) per FRCP 4.1.

Date: 06/26/2025

Matthew A. Stinnett
Judge's signature

City and state: Lexington, KY

Matthew A. Stinnett, U.S. Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF KENTUCKY
CENTRAL DIVISION
LEXINGTON**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PLAINTIFF

v.

AFFIDAVIT

LAURANCE D. NEWBY

DEFENDANT

I, Christine McHugh, being duly sworn, do hereby depose and state:

INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

1. I am employed as a Special Agent (SA) with the United States Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and have been such since graduating the DEA Academy in Quantico, Virginia. I am currently assigned to the DEA Lexington Resident Office (LRO) Enforcement Group in Lexington, Kentucky and have been since August 2021. My current duty assignment includes, but is not limited to, investigating complex drug conspiracies and organizations and individuals involved in the possession of and trafficking in controlled substances. I am authorized and have the responsibility to investigate persons for violations of federal law, involving the unlawful distribution of drugs, (21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1)), attempt and conspiracy to commit the same (21 U.S.C. § 846), and money laundering (18 U.S.C. § 1956 and 1957). In my capacity as a DEA Special Agent, I am authorized to arrest persons for violations of federal law, including for those offenses listed above.

2. I have participated in drug investigations extensively, including international narcotics smuggling operations; narcotics-related money laundering; and possession and distribution of fentanyl, cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and other drugs. I have debriefed defendants, cooperating individuals, and witnesses who, from their personal knowledge, related how they amassed, spent, converted, transported, distributed, and concealed the proceeds of their unlawful drug trafficking.

3. This affidavit is based upon my personal knowledge as well as information provided to me by members of the Lexington Police Department (LPD) Narcotics Enforcement Unit (NEU) and Kentucky State Police (KSP) East Interdiction Team. The information contained in this affidavit is not a complete account of everything known to me about this case. Rather, it contains the facts that I believe are sufficient to support a finding of probable cause.

4. The investigation to date indicates that there is probable cause to believe that on or about June 25, 2025, in Fayette County, Kentucky, in the Eastern District of Kentucky, Laurance D. Newby did knowingly and intentionally possess with intent to distribute a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of cocaine, a Schedule II controlled substance, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841; did knowingly and intentionally possess with intent to distribute a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of fentanyl, a Schedule II controlled substance, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841; and having previously been convicted of a felony in Fayette County (Kentucky) Circuit Court Case 05-CR-01219 for a criminal offense punishable by at least a year in prison, did knowingly and intentionally possess a Glock 26 firearm, serial number AHPW601, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 922. The following facts support the finding of probable cause.

PROBABLE CAUSE

5. Newby is the target of an ongoing DEA investigation and has been identified as a retail distributor of illegal drugs in the central Kentucky area. On June 25, 2025, at approximately 10:00 am, members of DEA LRO and LPD NEU identified Newby's Range Rover with Kentucky license plate E2Y365 parked in the rear of Avid Hotel Lexington located at 1810 Bryant Road, Lexington, Kentucky. Investigators were already aware that Newby was a retail distributor of controlled substances in the central Kentucky area and that the Range Rover was registered in the name of "Laurance D. Newby". At approximately 11:25 am, surveillance team members observed Newby exit the hotel and approach his Range Rover where he placed bags inside the vehicle. Newby was observed to secure the vehicle and check the handles to confirm it was locked. After departing, Newby quickly returned to the Range Rover, accessed the cabin, and obtained a water bottle. Newby then proceed to travel on foot to the area of the Brighton East Rail Trail wearing workout clothes and earbuds. When Newby was observed to walk east on the trail in the direction of Pleasant Ridge Drive, members of the KSP East Interdiction Team presented "Bella", a trained and certified drug odor detection canine, to conduct a "sniff" of Newby's Range Rover with Kentucky license plate E2Y365. "Bella" alerted to the odor of illegal drugs emanating from the vehicle.

6. At approximately 12:25 pm, Newby was observed by surveillance teams members to return to the area of the Brighton East Rail Trail trailhead near Ashley furniture, also located on Bryant Road, Lexington, Kentucky. Upon his return, members of DEA LRO and KSP approached Newby in attire identifying themselves as "police" and attempted to converse with him. Due to agents' knowledge of Newby's propensity to carry firearms, DEA Task Force Officer (TFO) David Lewis attempted to conduct a "Terry" pat of Newby for weapons. At that time, Newby began to take flight from agents/officers traveling east and reached into the left

pocket of his workout pants. A KSP Trooper utilized a “tazer” to stop Newby’s flight, and he was arrested without further incident. Approximately 8 grams of suspected cocaine was recovered from Newby’s pocket in the area where he had just previously placed his hands. This substance was later field-tested utilizing a reliable, handheld mass spectrometer and showed positive for the presence of cocaine, a Schedule II controlled substance. Following the apprehension of Newby, investigators conducted a search of the Range Rover utilizing a key seized from the person of Newby. In the backseat of the vehicle, investigators located a backpack which further contained approximately 1.016 kilograms of suspected cocaine, a loaded Glock 26 firearm (serial number AHPW601) with a round chambered, and digital scales. In the rear cargo area of the Range Rover and inside a natural void, investigators located and seized approximately 462 gross grams of suspected fentanyl broken down into multiple packages, consistent with amounts utilized for retail distribution. The suspected cocaine was field tested utilizing a reliable, handheld mass spectrometer with the substance testing positive for cocaine, a Schedule II controlled substance. The handheld mass spectrometer could not identify the substance located in the rear cargo area, so investigators utilized a chemical test later that same day at the LRO with the substance showing positive for the presence of fentanyl, a Schedule II controlled substance. Affiant is additionally aware that on November 22, 2005, Newby was sentenced to 5 years in prison (suspended for 5 years) following his criminal conviction in Fayette County Kentucky Circuit Court Case 05-CR-01219 for the offense of Trafficking in Controlled Substance First Degree, Cocaine. On February 27, 2008, Newby’s probation for that conviction was violated, and he was sentenced to prison with credit for time served in the amount of 401 days. Again, the firearm and illegal drugs were recovered from the Ranger Rover registered in Newby’s name which had been secured by Newby immediately prior to his walking

on the Brighton East Rail Trail and accessed by law enforcement utilizing keys located on Newby's person.

7. During the course of DEA's investigation of Newby, officers/agents identified that unit 816 of Storage Rentals of America, located at 137 Imperial Way, Nicholasville, Kentucky, was leased in the name of "Laurance Newby" following surveillance of Newby and his vehicle to this location. In response to DEA administrative subpoenas provided to Storage Rentals of America prior to and including June 2025, the business identified on both occasions that "Laurence Newby" was the lessee of unit 816. A trained drug odor detection canine was presented to the exterior of that unit on June 25, 2025, for the purpose of conducting a "sniff" and showed positive for the odor of illegal drugs emanating from inside the unit. That same day, DEA TFO Travis Steward applied for and received a state of Kentucky search warrant authorizing law enforcement to search unit 816 for evidence of drug trafficking. DEA LRO personnel executed the search warrant following Newby's arrest that same day. Inside the unit, agents/officers located and seized a functioning digital scale, cellophane wrap, plastic baggies, and a blender. Affiant is aware that these are all items utilized in the processing and repackaging of controlled substances.

8. The amounts of controlled substances recovered from Newby's vehicle are significant and indicative of trafficking rather than for personal consumption. The presence of a loaded firearm and digital scale in the same backpack as the suspected cocaine further supports affiant's belief that the recovered substances were being possessed for the purpose of additional distribution.

CONCLUSION

9. I believe that the facts set forth above support that there is probable cause to believe that on or about June 25, 2025, in Fayette County, Kentucky, in the Eastern District of Kentucky, Laurance D. Newby did knowingly and intentionally possess with intent to distribute a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of cocaine, a Schedule II controlled substance, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841; did knowingly and intentionally possess with intent to distribute a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of fentanyl, a Schedule II controlled substance, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841; and having previously been convicted of a felony in Fayette County (Kentucky) Circuit Court Case 05-CR-01219 for a criminal offense punishable by at least a year in prison, did knowingly and intentionally possess a Glock 26 firearm, serial number AHPW601, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(1).

/s/ Christine McHugh
Christine McHugh Special Agent
Drug Enforcement Administration

Attested to by the affiant by reliable electronic means per FRCrP 4.1 on this 26th of June, 2025.


MATTHEW A. STINNETT
U.S. MAGISTRATE JUDGE