



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

July 10, 2012

**FORMER DRUG COURT PARTICIPANT SENTENCED TO FIFTEEN YEARS
FOR FEDERAL METHAMPHETAMINE AND FIREARMS CONVICTION**

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning in federal court, Bernando Hernandez, 50, of Albuquerque, was sentenced to 15 years in prison for his conviction on methamphetamine trafficking and firearms charges, announced U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales. He will be on supervised release for five years after he completes his prison sentence.

Hernandez has been in federal custody since his arrest on Oct. 5, 2011. Thereafter, Hernandez was indicted on Jan. 12, 2012 in a superseding indictment, and charged with (1) possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute; (2) possession of heroin with intent to distribute; and (3) possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. The indictment charged Hernandez with possession of more than 50 grams of actual methamphetamine, more than a kilogram of heroin, and a .380 semiautomatic pistol on Oct. 5, 2011.

On April 17, 2012, Hernandez entered a guilty plea to Counts 1 and 3 of the superseding indictment. In his plea agreement, Hernandez admitted that he was on state probation and was enrolled in drug court on Oct. 5, 2011. He further admitted that, as a condition of participating in drug court, he was required to give his probation officer consent to search his residence. As a result, on Oct. 5, 2011, Hernandez permitted probation officers and Homeland Security Investigations agents to search his residence where they found methamphetamine, heroin and a firearm.

As required by the plea agreement, Count 2 of the superseding indictment was dismissed after Hernandez was sentenced.

The case was investigated by Homeland Security Investigations, the Probation and Parole Division of the New Mexico Corrections Department and the New Mexico State Police, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Lynn W.Y. Wang and Jeremy Pena.

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