



**Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for the City of New York**  
Bridget G. Brennan, Special Narcotics Prosecutor

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**Loaded Automatic Weapon, Handgun, 25 Pounds of Cocaine and \$350,000  
Cash Seized in the Bronx: Narcotics Shipped to New York from Puerto Rico  
inside Swiffer Boxes**

*Two Minors inside Apartment with Drugs and Weapons*

An alleged major trafficker and two other individuals are charged in connection with a large-scale cocaine distribution operation in the Morris Park neighborhood of the Bronx. Over 10 kilograms of cocaine, with an estimated street value of \$3.5 million, \$350,000 cash, a pistol and an assault rifle were allegedly recovered during a short-term investigation.

Bridget G. Brennan, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, Ray Donovan, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA), New York Division, New York City Police Commissioner Dermot F. Shea and State Police Acting Superintendent Kevin P. Bruen announced the arrests today. The investigation was conducted by the DEA's New York Drug Enforcement Task Force (NYDETF), Group T-42, which is comprised of DEA special agents, New York City Police Department (NYPD) detectives and New York State Police investigators. The DEA Los Angeles Field Division Strike Force assisted in the investigation.

Defendant JOSE VELEZ is accused of overseeing a cocaine distribution network that operated in part from his residence at 1619 Hone Avenue, Apt. 1. When agents and officers entered the residence, they encountered two minor children inside the apartment. A criminal complaint filed by the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor (SNP) charges VELEZ with Operating as a Major Trafficker, Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance in the First Degree, Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the First and Third Degrees, Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Third Degree and Unlawfully Dealing with a Child in the First Degree. At an arraignment in Manhattan Criminal Court late last night, VELEZ was held on bail set at \$250,000 cash/\$900,000 insurance bond/\$900,000 partially secured bond.

Defendants JORDAN WORTHLEY and MELINA MASULLO are each charged with Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the First and Third Degrees. MASULLO was arraigned today and bail was set. WORTHLEY is also expected to be arraigned today.

On Monday, June 7, 2021, members of NYDETF Group T-42 were conducting surveillance on VELEZ as part of the short-term investigation when they observed him exit 1619 Hone Avenue carrying a weighted grey reusable shopping bag and enter a grey Honda Pilot. Agents and officers followed VELEZ as he drove two blocks and pulled over in front of a Mercedes Benz. VELEZ got out of the Honda with the grey bag, walked over to the Mercedes and placed the bag inside the front passenger window. He then returned to 1619 Hone Avenue.

Agents and officers stopped the Mercedes in the drive-thru lane of a McDonald's restaurant located at Williamsbridge Road and Silver Street. Defendant MASULLO was in the driver's seat and the sole occupant of the car. The grey shopping bag was on the front passenger seat and appeared to contain a white brick-shaped object. Further inspection revealed the bag allegedly contained two kilograms of cocaine.

Back at 1619 Hone Avenue, at approximately 2 p.m. agents and officers saw a grey 2017 BMW park in front of the building. Defendant WORTHLEY got out of the car and entered the building. Approximately 20 minutes later, he and VELEZ came out of the building together and approached the Honda and the BMW. Members of NYDETF Group T-42 stopped VELEZ and WORTHLEY and froze 1619 Hone Avenue, Apt. 1, while they obtained court-authorized search warrants for the apartment and the vehicles. Upon entering the apartment, agents and officers encountered the two minors (born in 2005 and 2006).

At approximately 11:20 p.m., members of NYDETF Group T-42 obtained court authorization to search of 1619 Hone Avenue, Apt. 1 and recovered two loaded firearms, including an assault weapon, up to 12 pounds of narcotics and \$350, 000.

Five kilograms of cocaine in an orange plastic bag were found in a bedroom. Also in the bedroom, agents and officers found a loaded assault weapon wrapped in a sheet. A dresser drawer contained a loaded .38 caliber firearm. Hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash in multiple bags were hidden in a closet in the bedroom. Additional quantities of cocaine wrapped in twisted plastic bags were on a countertop in the dining area.

Yesterday morning at approximately 6 a.m., members of NYDETF Group T-42 conducted a court-authorized search of the BMW and recovered two cardboard packing boxes with shipping labels indicating they had originated in Puerto Rico. Each shipping box was addressed to a storage facility and contained a kilogram of cocaine concealed inside a Swiffer Wet Mopping Cloths box. Snack packs surrounded the Swiffer boxes. A third Swiffer box concealing a kilogram of cocaine was also inside the car.

After a review of travel records, agents and officers determined VELEZ had recently travelled to Puerto Rico. The results of DEA Laboratory analysis on the cocaine in this case are pending. DEA estimates the street value of the cocaine at over \$3 million.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan thanked Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark and commended SNP's Special Investigations Bureau, DEA New York Division, the New York City Police Department, the New York State Police and DEA Los Angeles Field Division Strike Force for their work on the case.

"The court authorized search of this apartment very likely prevented gun violence, which has plagued our city, and especially the Bronx," said Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan. "High-level drug trafficking extracts a tragic toll from our communities in violence and lives lost to substance use."

“The illicit drug arena has exploded with the introduction of fentanyl and its potency exponent when combined with cocaine and other drugs,” said DEA Special Agent in Charge Ray Donovan. “Over the past year we have seen a rise in cocaine seizures triple, but even more worrisome is that through our investigations we have encountered more than twice as many guns this year than last, further reaffirming the relationship between gun violence and drug trafficking. DEA continues to work hard with our law enforcement partners to make communities safe. I applaud the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor, the DEA Los Angeles Field Division Strike Force, and our partners of the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force, the NYPD, and NYSP.”

“This case reflects the NYPD’s continued effort to stop the trafficking of narcotics by targeting those most responsible,” said Police Commissioner Dermot Shea. “I thank the hard-working investigators and our law enforcement partners for insuring these criminal will be held to account for their actions.”

Superintendent Kevin P. Bruen said, “I applaud the great law enforcement team work in this case. The disruption of this illegal drug trafficking operation sends a clear message that we will find and punish the people who are responsible transporting and selling these illegal substances on our streets. We will continue to work vigilantly to put dangerous individuals like these behind bars and to prevent the trafficking of cocaine and other harmful narcotics within our communities.”

<b>Defendants</b>	<b>Charges</b>
Jose Velez Bronx, NY Age: 40	Operating as a Major Trafficker – 1 ct CSCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 1 ct CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 cts CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 1 ct CPW 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 1 ct CPW 3 <sup>rd</sup> (based on committing 265.01(2) and a prior conviction) – 1 ct Unlawfully Dealing with a Child 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 cts
Jordan Worthley Hackensack, N.J. Age: 29	CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 1 ct CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 1 ct
Melina Masullo New York, NY Age: 27	CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 1 ct CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 1 ct

The charges and allegations are merely accusations and the defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.