

PRESS RELEASE

Violent Detroit Street Gang Indicted on RICO Charges

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For Immediate Release

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

DETROIT – Members of a violent Detroit gang were indicted on various federal charges including racketeering conspiracy, trafficking controlled substances, firearm charges, and unemployment insurance fraud, announced United States Attorney Dawn N. Ison.

The members of the Purple Heart Vets gang who were indicted by a federal grand jury include:

- Devin King, 24, of Detroit
- Trevon Mathis, 23, of Detroit
- Jordan Gilmore, 24, of Novi
- Devon Hill, 25, of Taylor
- Vincent McKinney, 24, of Detroit
- Malik Thomas, 24, of Detroit

U.S. Attorney Ison was joined in the indictment unsealing announcement by Special Agent in Charge James Deir, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Detroit Division, and Irene Lindow, Special Agent in Charge of the Great Lakes Region of the Department of Labor-Office of the Inspector General.

According to the indictment and other court records, the Purple Heart Vets gang allegedly promote themselves as soldiers in battle, engaging in violence on the streets of Detroit on behalf of the gang. Operating primarily on the northwest side of Detroit, the leaders rewarded gang members who engaged in acts of violence with Purple Hearts. They obtained guns and coordinated attacks on their rivals. The attacks led to multiple shootings in and around Detroit, which resulted in serious injuries and fatalities. In one instance, a minor was caught in the crossfire during an attack on a rival gang member. The gang also sold controlled substances and engaged in significant unemployment insurance fraud to raise money to further their criminal activities.

"This indictment is another example of our office's commitment to addressing violent crime in the City of Detroit. We believe that by removing the individuals who are the primary drivers of violent crime we can provide our neighborhoods with the peace we should all expect and deserve," U.S. Attorney Ison said.

"Serious crimes have serious consequences. Gang members using the streets of Detroit as a battlefield to settle scores can expect to be shut down by law enforcement," said Special Agent in Charge James Deir. "It should be common knowledge throughout metro-Detroit: If you pack an illegal firearm, you should pack your bags for prison...Everyone deserves to live in a community without the threat of senseless gun violence."

"An important part of the mission of the Office of Inspector General is to investigate allegations of fraud involving unemployment insurance programs. This is particularly true when an allegation involves racketeering and violent crimes in our communities. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners and state workforce agencies to aggressively investigate these type of allegations," said Irene Lindow, Special Agent-in-Charge, Great Lakes Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

The case was investigated by special agents of the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives and the Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys assigned to the United States Attorney's Office's Violent and Organized Crime Unit.

This case is part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), the centerpiece of the Department of Justice's violent crime reduction efforts. PSN is an evidence-based program proven to be effective at reducing violent crime. Through PSN, a broad spectrum of stakeholders work together to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in the community and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. As part of this strategy, PSN focuses enforcement efforts on the most violent offenders and partners with locally based prevention and reentry programs for lasting reductions in crime.

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Components

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