



THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of JUSTICE

United States Attorney's Office
District of Oregon

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Mexican National Unlawfully Residing in the United States Pleads Guilty to Firearms Offenses

MEDFORD, Ore.—A Mexican National unlawfully residing in the United States, Samuel Rodrigo Melo Santos, 27, pleaded guilty to alien in possession of a firearm, and making false statements in acquisition of a firearm, announced U.S. Attorney Scott E. Bradford for the District of Oregon.

According to court documents, in July 2025, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) investigators, as part of a compliance inspection, began reviewing ATF Form 4473, known as the Firearms Transaction Records, of a Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) in Cave Junction, Oregon. ATF Form 4473 must be completed by the person who is purchasing a firearm. During the inspection, investigators observed repeated sales of the same make and model of firearm by a group of individuals sharing the same address in O'Brien and Medford, Oregon, indicative of firearms trafficking.

On ATF Form 4473, defendants wrote "Mexico" for place of birth and checked the box next to the United States for country of citizenship. An immigration query into Melo Santos, and his co-defendants, concluded they have no legal status and are residing unlawfully in the United States.

Melo Santos told law enforcement that he bought firearms and sold them to anyone, including people who couldn't legally buy them. Melo Santos purchased 91 firearms for \$56,448 between May 2024 and July 2025 and 40,000 rounds of ammunition. One of these firearms was later found in Mexico. As part of the plea agreement, Melo Santos agreed to forfeit any criminally derived proceeds and property used to facilitate his crimes identified by the government prior to sentencing.

Melo Santos faces a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine and 3 years of supervised release. Melo Santos will be sentenced on October 9, 2026, before U.S. District Court Judge Michael McShane.

On December 18, 2025, Melo Santos, and three co-defendants made their first appearance in federal court before a U.S. Magistrate Judge. Co-defendants Samuel Amador Ortega, Aldo Melo Amador, and Oscar Amador Ortega are awaiting trial.

ATF is investigating the case with assistance from the Drug Enforcement Administration, Homeland Security Investigations, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Assistant U.S. Attorney Judith Harper is prosecuting the case.

This case is part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), a program bringing together all levels of law enforcement and the communities they serve to reduce violent crime and gun violence, and to make our neighborhoods safer for everyone. On May 26, 2021, the Department launched a violent crime reduction strategy strengthening PSN based on these core principles: fostering trust and legitimacy in our communities, supporting community-based organizations that help prevent violence from occurring in the first place, setting focused and strategic enforcement priorities, and measuring the results. For more information about Project Safe Neighborhoods, please visit [Justice.gov/PSN](https://www.justice.gov/PSN).

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