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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FATHER AND SON AMONG FIVE DEFENDANTS INDICTED BY QUEENS GRAND JURY  
FOR OPERATING OPEN-AIR DRUG MARKET**

*Defendants Allegedly Sold Fentanyl, Heroin and Cocaine from Dead-End Street in Jamaica, Queens; More Than Ten Kilos of Narcotics, Four Guns Confiscated at Time of Arrests;  
Main Defendant Faces Up to Life in Prison if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, joined by New York City Police Commissioner Keechant Sewell, announced today that a group of four defendants were indicted by a Queens County grand jury. The defendants, including Boris Ford of Roosevelt Island, Manhattan and his son Barshawn Ford of Jamaica, Queens, are variously charged with conspiracy and criminal sale of a controlled substance for allegedly packaging and selling an assortment of narcotics to walk up customers- including heroin, cocaine and fentanyl- from an open-air drug market on a dead-end Jamaica street on multiple occasions between May 2021 and June 2022. A fifth defendant, Lonnie Scott, also of Jamaica, Queens, is charged with possession of kilos of narcotics worth more than \$75,000.

District Attorney Katz said, “Illicit drugs – especially dangerous substances such as fentanyl – poison our communities and place the lives of countless individuals at risk. While Queens County continues to struggle with an alarming increase in fatal drug overdoses since the pandemic began, my Office is relentless in our efforts to take down those who sell poison on our streets. Following a long-term investigation conducted jointly by my Major Economic Crimes Bureau and the New York City Police Department, these five defendants face serious charges and will be held to account for their alleged actions in jeopardizing the safety of our neighborhoods.”

Police Commissioner Sewell said, “As this case demonstrates, the NYPD and our law-enforcement partners will continue to combat the scourge of illegal drugs wherever, and whenever, it threatens New Yorkers. Selling this poison in our community shows a callous disregard for human life. These criminals prey on some of our city’s most vulnerable people, and the NYPD will never cease in our efforts to bring them to justice. I want to thank the Office of the Queens District Attorney, along with all of our investigators, for their outstanding work on this case.”

The District Attorney’s Office identified four of the defendants as Boris Ford, 57, of Roosevelt Island, Manhattan; his son Barshawn Ford, 29; Esau Daniels, 28; and Leon Spears, 60 all of Jamaica, Queens. The defendants have variously been charged with conspiracy, criminal sale of a controlled substance, and criminal possession of a controlled substance.

Defendants Boris Ford and Leon Spears face additional charges stemming from items recovered during search warrants this week. At that time, members of the New York City Police Department executed authorized search warrants on multiple locations, including the residences of Boris Ford and Leon Spears. The search warrants yielded four illegal firearms (including a MAC-11 submachine gun), more than five kilograms of heroin

and cocaine, and cash. Boris Ford was charged in a five-count criminal court complaint with criminal possession of a controlled substance in the first degree, operating as a major trafficker and criminal possession of a weapon. Leon Spears was charged in a seven-count criminal court complaint with, among other charges, criminal possession of a weapon, and criminal possession of a controlled substance.

An additional search warrant resulted in charges for a fifth defendant, Lonnie Scott, 50, who is alleged to have supplied Boris Ford with narcotics. This search warrant, executed at Scott's Jamaica, Queens residence, yielded more than five kilograms of cocaine and heroin. **(See Addendum for further details on all defendants).**

Utilizing complex court-authorized electronic surveillance warrants, surveillance, and other investigative tools, the Queens District Attorney's Major Economic Crimes Bureau, working with the New York City Police Department's Queens South Violent Crime Squad, conducted a thirteen-month investigation dubbed Operation Overpass. In October 2021, the Court authorized electronic surveillance of a mobile telephone used by defendant Boris Ford. Detectives assigned to the Queens South Violent Crime Squad, including undercovers, determined that the elder Ford had enlisted his son Barshawn Ford and at least three other men in an alleged scheme to sell narcotics in a Queens neighborhood near 157<sup>th</sup> Street and 109<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The men allegedly ran an open market, controlling a dead-end street where customers could walk up and purchase illicit narcotics on demand. In utilizing the eavesdropping warrant, the detectives learned that Lonnie Scott was allegedly one of Boris Ford's suppliers of narcotics.

According to the charges, from May 2021 to June 2022, defendants Boris Ford, his son Barshawn Ford, Esau Daniels and Leon Spears conspired to sell an inventory of drugs including heroin, cocaine and fentanyl on at least 23 occasions.

DA Katz said, as alleged, the elder Ford would obtain narcotics from various suppliers, including Lonnie Scott that, he then repackaged for resale with his son, Barshawn Ford and Esau Daniels. Barshawn Ford and Daniels provided the narcotics to several street dealers including defendant Leon Spears and brought the cash proceeds back to Boris Ford. Defendants Boris Ford, Barshawn Ford, Daniels and Spears allegedly communicated information about their drug inventory and sales through scores of phone calls and text messages intercepted during the course of the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by New York City Police Department's Queens South Violent Crime Squad, with lead Detective Brian Ritto, under the supervision of Sergeant Brendan Meehan, Lieutenant Eric Sonnenberg, Captain Robert Dandrea, Deputy Inspector Joseph Matzinger, and Deputy Chief Jerry OSullivan.

Supervising Assistant District Attorney Lissa L. Yang, of the District Attorney's Major Economic Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case, under the supervision of Mary Lowenburg, Bureau Chief of the District Attorney's Major Economic Crimes Bureau, Catherine Kane, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief of the District Attorney's Major Economic Crimes Bureau, Jonathan Scharf, Deputy Bureau Chief of the District Attorney's Major Economic Crimes Bureau, and Kieran Linehan, Supervisor, Major Narcotics Unit of the District Attorney's Major Economic Crimes Bureau under the overall supervision of Gerard Brave, Executive Assistant District Attorney in charge of Investigations.

*Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.*

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**Note to Editors: Archived press releases are available at [www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org).**

## ADDENDUM

**BORIS FORD**, 57, of Main Street in Roosevelt Island, Manhattan, is charged in a 68-count grand jury indictment with criminal sale of a controlled substance in the first degree, criminal sale of a controlled substance in the second degree, criminal sale of a controlled substance in the third degree, criminal possession of a controlled substance in the third degree and conspiracy in the fourth degree. Ford was arraigned on July 15, 2022 before Queens Supreme Court Justice John Zoll. Justice Zoll ordered the defendant to return to Court on August 1, 2022. If convicted, Ford faces up to 24 years in prison.

Additionally, the defendant was arraigned last Friday before Queens Criminal Court Judge Denise Johnson on a five-count criminal court complaint charged with criminal possession of a controlled substance in the first degree, operating as a major trafficker, conspiracy in the second degree, possession of a controlled substance in the third degree, and criminal possession of a weapon in the third degree. Judge Johnson ordered the defendant to return to Court on September 6, 2022. If convicted, Ford faces up to life in prison. The defendant is currently represented by Marvyn Kornberg.

**BARSHAWN FORD**, 29, of 159<sup>th</sup> Street in Jamaica, Queens was arraigned on July 13, 2022 before Queens Supreme Court Justice Donna-Marie Golia charged with criminal sale and criminal possession of a controlled substance in the third degrees and conspiracy in the fourth degree. Justice Golia ordered the defendant to return to Court on August 2, 2022. If convicted, Ford faces up to nine years in prison. The defendant is represented by Marc Laykind.

**ESAU DANIELS**, 28, of 159<sup>th</sup> Street in Jamaica, Queens was arraigned July 13, 2022 before Queens Supreme Court Justice Donna-Marie Golia charged with criminal sale of a controlled substance in the second degree, criminal sale of a controlled substance in the third degree, criminal possession of a controlled substance in the third degree and conspiracy in the fourth degree. Justice Golia ordered the defendant to return to Court on August 1, 2022. If convicted, Daniels faces up to fourteen years in prison. The defendant is being represented by Scott Bookstein.

**LEON SPEARS**, 60, of 161 Place in Jamaica, Queens was arraigned yesterday before Queens Supreme Court Justice John Zoll charged with criminal sale and criminal possession of a controlled substance in the third degrees and conspiracy in the fourth degree. Justice Zoll ordered the defendant to return to Court on August 1, 2022. If convicted, Spears faces up to fifteen years in prison.

Additionally, Spears was arraigned July 14, 2022 in Queens Criminal Court before Queens Criminal Court Judge Marty Lentz on a seven-count complaint charging him with criminal possession of a controlled substance in the third degree, felony and misdemeanor criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, criminally using drug paraphernalia in the second degree and unlawful possession of a pistol or revolver. Judge Lentz ordered the defendant to return to Court on July 18, 2022. If convicted, Spears faces up to nine years in prison. The defendant is being represented by David Bart.

**LONNIE SCOTT**, 50, of 143<sup>rd</sup> Street in Jamaica, Queens, was arraigned July 13, 2022 before Queens Criminal Court Judge Marty Lentz on a complaint charging him with criminal possession of a controlled substance in the first degree and operating as a major trafficker. Judge Lentz ordered the defendant to return to court on July 18, 2022. If convicted, Scott faces up to up to life years in prison. The defendant is being represented by Edwin Schulman.

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