



BCPO News

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Jury Finds Camden Heroin Dealer Guilty of Homicide in Death of Customer

MOUNT HOLLY - Burlington County Prosecutor Scott Coffina announced that a Camden drug dealer was convicted today in Superior Court of homicide and other charges for causing the death of a customer to whom he sold heroin last year.

The jury deliberated over three days before finding Jose LaPorte, 25, guilty of Strict Liability for Drug-Induced Death (First Degree), Possession of a Controlled Dangerous Substance (Third Degree), two counts of Possession of a Controlled Dangerous Substance with Intent to Distribute (Third Degree), and Distribution of a Controlled Dangerous Substance (Third Degree).

The Hon. Jeanne T. Covert, P.J.Cr., set sentencing for March 23.

The investigation revealed that Sung Han, 35, fatally overdosed in the early morning hours of April 12, 2017, in his Burlington Township home. The investigation further determined that Han had purchased the heroin from LaPorte.

LaPorte was taken into custody on April 14 in Burlington Township by members of the Burlington Township Police Department, who found heroin on his person.

Prosecutor Coffina vowed to continue to aggressively pursue the “purveyors of poison” whose clients fatally overdose on illicit drugs they provide.

“We are gratified by the jury’s verdict and appreciate the outstanding job by the Burlington County Prosecutor’s Office and Burlington Township detectives and officers who investigated this case, and by Assistant Prosecutor Keith Carmy in presenting it at trial,” Prosecutor Coffina said. “With over 130 overdose deaths in our County in 2017, law enforcement will be putting an ever greater emphasis on investigating fatal overdoses as potential crime scenes and we will pursue prosecutions under the strict liability, drug-induced-death homicide statute whenever the evidence supports it. Meanwhile, today our thoughts are with the family of Sung Han, and we hope that the jury’s verdict gives them some degree of comfort.”

The case was investigated by the Burlington Township Police Department and the Burlington County Prosecutor’s Office High-Tech Crimes Unit, with assistance from the Willingboro Township Police Department. The lead investigator was Burlington Township Police Detective Anthony Fontana.

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