



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

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Grand Rapids Man Sentenced For Felon Firearm Possession and Falsely Attesting U.S. Citizenship

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GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN — U.S. Attorney Andrew Birge announced today that Franklin J. Flores, 42, most recently of Grand Rapids, Michigan, was sentenced to two concurrent terms of 24 months' imprisonment by U.S. District Judge Janet T. Neff, concurrent to his current State of Michigan sentence of 18 to 60 months for identity theft. Flores pleaded guilty pursuant to a plea agreement to one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition, and one count of falsely attesting U.S. Citizenship on a Form I-130 Petition for Alien Relative and submitting that form to the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services with the intent to obtain benefit for another person.

The investigation began with reports by a New Mexico man that Flores had stolen his identity. On January 20, 2017, a search warrant conducted at Flores' residence in Grand Rapids located a Springfield Armory XD-40 .40 caliber pistol and 11 rounds of .40 caliber ammunition. With a 2014 Carrying a Concealed Weapon conviction in Kent County, Michigan, Flores could not lawfully possess this firearm. Flores also assumed the identity of the New Mexico man and his U.S. Citizenship to petition to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services for alien relative status for his wife. U.S. District Court Judge Neff noted that Flores' actions were some of the most egregious she has seen when he assumed the identity of the New Mexico man and thus his U.S. Citizenship status to obtain benefits for his wife.

"Franklin Flores flouted both federal gun and immigration laws," U.S. Attorney Birge said. "The Court's sentence is a message that the consequences are severe for convicted felons who violate federal gun laws and for those who try to steal and lie their way to immigration benefits."

"Identity theft and weapons violations represent serious threats to both our national security and public safety," said Steve Francis, Homeland Security Investigations ("HSI") Detroit special agent in charge. "The sentencing handed down in this case makes it clear that these crimes remain a priority for HSI and our partner agencies."

HSI Grand Rapids investigated this offense, with assistance from the Wyoming Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney Clay M. West prosecuted the case.

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