

Federal Jury Finds Two Men Guilty Of Gang Crimes in Dodge City

WICHITA, KAN. – A federal jury today found two men guilty of gang crimes including murder in Dodge City, U.S. Attorney Barry Grissom said today.

Pedro Garcia, 27, Dodge City, Kan., and **Gonzalo Ramirez**, 28, Dodge City, Kan., both members of the Norteno street gang, were convicted on all counts, including:

- Count one (both defendants): Conspiracy by members of the Norteno gang to commit crimes in violation of the federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act.
- Count two (both defendants): Conspiracy to commit murder. On June 8, 2009, the defendants conspired to murder Israel Peralta, Mariano Sorano, Faustino Peralta and Roberto Arco.
- Count three (both defendants): Murder. On June 8, 2009, the defendants murdered Israel Peralta.
- Count four (both defendants): Attempted murder. On June 8, 2009, the defendants attempted to murder Mariano Sorano, Faustino Peralta and Roberto Arco.
- Count five (both defendants): Assault with a dangerous weapon. On June 8, 2009, the defendants used firearms to assault Israel Peralta, Mariano Sorano, Faustino Peralta and Roberto Arco.
- Count six (both defendants): Possession and discharge of a firearm during a violent crime. On June 8, 2009, the defendants discharged firearms in furtherance of a crime of violence.
- Count seven (both defendants): Assault with a dangerous weapon. On June 8, 2009, the defendants used a firearm to assault Isidro Raleas-Velasquez.
- Count eight (both defendants): Conspiracy to commit assault with a dangerous weapon. On June 8, 2009, the defendants conspired to assault Isidro Raleas-Velasquez with a firearm.
- Count nine (both defendants): Possessing and brandishing a firearm during a violent crime. On June 8, 2009, the defendants possessed and brandished firearms in furtherance of a crime of violence.
- Count ten (Ramirez only): Conspiracy to murder. On Oct. 4, 2008, the defendants conspired to murder Rumalda Hipolito and Abel Hernandez.
- Count eleven (Ramirez only): Attempted murder. On Oct. 4, 2008, the defendants attempted to murder Rumalda Hipolito and Abel Hernandez.
- Count twelve (Ramirez only): Assault with a dangerous weapon. On Oct. 4, 2008, the defendants assaulted Rumalda Hipolito and Abel Hernandez with a firearm.
- Count 13 (Ramirez only): Possession and discharge of a firearm during a

violent crime. On Oct. 4, 2008, the defendants possessed and discharged firearms in furtherance of an aggravated assault.

During the June 8, 2009, incident, the defendants and other gang members fired at a group of men gathered at a trailer park located at 201 E. McArtor in Dodge City. Peralta was killed in the shooting.

On the same date, the defendants and other gang members robbed Isidro Raleas-Valasquez and Alonzo Diego at their home in the 1000 block of Ave. E. They struck Raleas-Vasquez in the head with a gun and stole money from the victims.

In the Oct. 4, 2008, incident, the Ramirez used a firearm to attack a group of men they believed to be members of the rival Sureno gang at a residence in the 1100 block of 4th Ave. in Dodge City.

During trial, prosecutors presented evidence that members of the Nortenos committed crimes including murder, attempted murder, conspiracy, assault, robbery and distribution of narcotics for the purpose of enriching themselves and creating a climate of fear in order to intimidate rival gang members and the general public.

Sentencing is set for Jan. 6, 2014. The crimes carry the following penalties:

Conspiracy: A maximum penalty of 20 years and a fine up to \$250,000.

Violent crimes in furtherance of racketeering: A maximum penalty of 20 years and a fine up to \$250,000; or a maximum penalty of 10 years and a fine up to \$250,000 depending on the type of violent crime.

Murder in furtherance of racketeering: A maximum penalty of life in prison, and a fine up to \$250,000.

Possession or discharge of a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence: Not less than five years nor more than life and a fine up to \$250,000..

Conspiracy to commit assault with a dangerous weapon in furtherance of racketeering: A maximum penalty of three years and a fine up to \$250,000.

Grissom commended the Dodge City Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Ford County Sheriff's Office, the Ford County Attorney's Office and the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, Assistant U.S. Attorney Lanny Welch and Assistant U.S. Attorney Aaron Smith for their work on the case.