

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF APPLICATION FOR SEARCH WARRANT**

I. INTRODUCTION

I, Darren Hess, (hereafter referred to as affiant), being duly sworn, deposes and states the following:

II. BACKGROUND, TRAINING, and KNOWLEDGE

1. I am a “law enforcement officer” within the meaning of Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 41(a)(2)(C), that is, a government agent engaged in enforcing the criminal laws and duly authorized by the Attorney General to request a search warrant. I am a Postal Inspector with the United States Postal Inspection Service and currently assigned to the Lexington, Kentucky field office. I have been employed as a Postal Inspector since 2012, and prior to that I was employed as a Federal Air Marshal with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, in Washington, D.C.

2. As a Postal Inspector, I am responsible for investigating violations of federal law occurring within the Eastern District of Kentucky, and specifically violations of federal law involving the use of the United States Mails. I have attended various law enforcement training academies, including the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), The FAMS Training Center, and the Postal Inspection Service’s Career Development Division. As a Postal Inspector, I have directed and participated in investigations that led to the conviction of persons using the U.S. Mails to commit and to facilitate violations of federal law, including violations of the federal drugs laws.

3. From my training and experience as a Postal Inspector, I know the following:

a. that the United States Mails, and in particular the Express Mail and Priority Mail delivery services offered by the United States Postal Service, are frequently used as means by which to commit and facilitate the illegal distribution of substances that are controlled under federal law.

b. that with the Express Mail and Priority Mail delivery service, the United States Postal Service provides the sender with a guaranteed delivery time of one to three days, depending on the location and time at which the sender deposits the package with the United States Postal Service, and that the sender is then able to track the package online by its uniquely assigned tracking number from the time it is accepted by the United States Postal Service until the time it is delivered by the United States Postal Service.

### III. PROPERTY TO BE SEARCHED

4. A Priority Mail package (white USPS “Priority Mail” Large Flat Rate Box) with tracking number 9405 5362 0624 9308 5606 36 that is addressed to Jose Sanchez at 1536 Deer Lake Dr. Lexington, KY 40515 and from Sam’s Office Supply Co. of 5703 Blackthorne Ave. Lakewood, CA 90712.

### IV. FACTS OF INVESTIGATION

5. On September 15, 2025, a suspicious Priority Mail package with tracking number 9405 5362 0624 9308 5606 36 was discovered at the USPS Processing and Distribution Center (P&DC) in Lexington, KY and taken to the US Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) office in Lexington, KY. On September 16, 2025, the package was presented among a lineup of four parcels of various sizes and shapes to “Mardi,” a certified narcotics detection canine. Mardi was handled by Lexington Police Officer Ben

Hallock, who provided the following information about the training and certification of Mardi and himself:

a. In January 2025, Mardi successfully completed narcotics detection certification by the North American Police Work Dog Association in the detection of controlled substances.

b. Mardi is trained to give a positive, passive alert when he detects the odor of a controlled substance.

c. Mardi is certified to detect the odor of the following controlled substances: marijuana, heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and ecstasy.

d. Officer Hallock advised me that he knows from his experience as a drug dog handler that the drug detection program and certification by the North American Police Work Dog Association is recognized as a bona fide program. Furthermore, he advised that Mardi's successful completion was based on his reliability in detecting the odor of controlled substances in a controlled setting.

6. On September 16, 2025, Mardi was presented with four parcels, three of which I know did not contain any controlled substances, and the fourth parcel being Priority Mail package with tracking number 9405 5362 0624 9308 5606 36. According to Officer Hallock, Mardi alerted to the Priority Mail package with tracking number 9405 5362 0624 9308 5606 36 as being a package from which he (Mardi) detected the odor of controlled substances.

V. CONCLUSION

7. Based on the information contained in this Affidavit, I have probable cause to believe that controlled substances under federal drug laws are contained in Priority Mail package with tracking number 9405 5362 0624 9308 5606 36 and that such controlled substances are evidence of a crime and are contraband and illegally possessed in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 843(b)(use of mails to commit or facilitate a drug felony) and 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1)(knowing and intentional distribution of controlled substances).

**IT IS REQUESTED** that the Court authorize the search of a United States Postal Service Priority Mail package with tracking number 9405 5362 0624 9308 5606 36.

The above statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and your Affiant requests that a search warrant be issued for the above-described property.

/s/ Darren Hess

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Darren Hess  
U.S. Postal Inspector

Sworn by the affiant in accordance with the requirements of Fed. R. Crim. P. 41 by telephone or other reliable electronic means this 18 day September 2025.



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Matthew A. Stinnett  
U.S. Magistrate Judge