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Man Pleads Guilty to Having Gun after Domestic Violence Conviction

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A Shepherdsville man pleaded guilty last week to charges of possessing an illegal firearm and violating a federal law that prohibits people convicted of domestic violence from possessing a gun.

William E. Noble could receive up to 20 years in prison and a \$500,000 fine when he is sentenced Aug. 1 in U.S. District Court in Louisville, according to a statement from the U.S. attorney's office.

Federal law bars Noble, 38, from possessing a gun because he had pleaded guilty in October 2000 to a misdemeanor charge of harassment with physical contact in Jefferson District Court, prosecutors said.

In 1996, the federal Gun Control Act was amended to generally prohibit people convicted of misdemeanor crimes involving domestic violence from possessing any firearm or ammunition.

It is similar to the federal law that prohibits felons from possessing firearms, said Hancy Jones, assistant U.S. attorney for the Western District of Kentucky.

Noble admitted to federal agents that he had completed a Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives form on Feb. 2, 2004, to buy a .44-caliber Smith & Wesson at Deprez Quality Jewelry and Loan on Preston Highway. He received the gun on Feb. 6.

On Sept. 28, 2004, ATF agents interviewed Noble about his purchase, and he agreed to go with an agent to retrieve the weapon from his apartment.

The agent asked Noble if he had any other firearms or ammunition at home, and Noble initially said he did not, attorneys said. A short time later, Noble admitted he had a sawed-off shotgun in his closet – a weapon that he had not registered and that was illegally modified, attorneys said.

Jones said that in the last year or so his office had prosecuted eight cases involving people possessing firearms after they had been convicted of domestic violence.

Guns are the most commonly used weapons in domestic homicides, said Jane Burks , president of the Center for Women and Families in Louisville.

TO LEARN MORE

For more information about the law prohibiting people convicted of domestic violence from possessing guns and ammunition, check online at atf.treas.gov/firearms/domestic/qa.htm or contact the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives at (800) 800-3855.

For those experiencing domestic violence, the Center for Women and Families' crisis hot line is available 24 hours a day at 581-7222 or toll-free at (877) 803-7577.

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