



JASON W. SMITH
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

State of North Carolina
General Court of Justice
Sixth Prosecutorial District
Wilmington, NC 28402

POST OFFICE BOX 352
PHONE: (910) 772-6610
FAX: (910) 772-6611

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Contact: Samantha Dooies, Public Information Officer
Samantha.Dooies@ncourts.org
(910) 772-6934

Wilmington Man Sentenced to Eight Years in Prison for Death by Distribution

Michael Tyler Britt, age 31, pled guilty on Thursday, December 18, 2025, to Death by Distribution. He was sentenced by Judge Ricardo Jensen to 84-113 months in prison.

Ruth Lawson, age 83, was found unresponsive in her home on December 5, 2024. An empty bag used to contain fentanyl near her. Lawson was declared dead due to fentanyl toxicity. The New Hanover County Sheriff's Office Vice and Narcotics Division's investigation would reveal that Britt, who lived less than 300 feet from Lawson, sold the fentanyl that proximately caused Lawson's death.

"Opioid addiction touches victims and families throughout the community. This case demonstrates the dangers of fentanyl at any age, and the efforts of my office and law enforcement to hold individuals who contribute to these deaths accountable for their actions," said District Attorney Jason W. Smith.



Michael Tyler Britt