



NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Police charge six in drug distribution case *Part of ongoing effort to combat the opioid crisis*

Howard County police continue to combat the opioid crisis by targeting drug dealers and devoting resources to monitor and investigate the use of opioids and other illegal drugs in the county. Detectives have charged six people for involvement in the distribution of heroin, crack cocaine and prescription pills in Columbia. One of the men was out on bond when he was arrested.

Detectives received information that a man they had arrested in April, Brandon Dews, 31, of North Avenue in Baltimore, was selling drugs from an apartment in the 11300 block of Little Patuxent Parkway. Dews was indicted in May on multiple counts of drug distribution and possession. He was released on \$75,000 bond.

Police believe that while awaiting trial, Dews was using the apartment in Columbia to sell drugs. Detectives served a search warrant on the apartment and found Dews and five other people inside. All were arrested. Investigators also seized various illegal drugs packaged for sale and drug paraphernalia.

Dews was taken into custody and is being held without bond at the Howard County Detention Center. Also charged with various drug possession and distribution charges: Catherine Beebe, 55, of Columbia, released on \$10,000 bond; and Carlos Black, 33, of Columbia, released on \$3,500 bond.

“We are aggressively going after people who are selling opioids, like heroin and prescription pills, on our streets,” said Police Chief Gary L. Gardner. “These recent arrests are a positive step in our effort to address this epidemic. We will continue to collaborate with other agencies to approach this from all sides, including prevention, education, treatment and recovery.”

To date, there have been 45 overdose deaths and 144 non-fatal overdoses in Howard County in 2017. In 2016, there were 29 heroin-related overdose deaths and 131 non-fatal opioid overdoses for the entire year, sometimes in combination with other drugs.

“The police should be commended for continuing to make important strides in getting these pushers of poison off our streets,” said Howard County Executive Allan H. Kittleman. “Law enforcement plays a critical role in fighting the battle against drug addiction, as do our other prevention efforts to educate and treat those who could and do fall victim to this epidemic.”

The police department encourages residents to report suspected drug activity by calling 410-290-DRUG. Callers may remain anonymous. Anyone who needs help for opioid abuse can call 800-422-0009.

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