

# Dept. of Justice: Rhinelander man sentenced to 100 months for possessing stolen ammunition

Posted on Tuesday, Nov 30, 2021

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MADISON, WIS. – Timothy M. O’Shea, Acting United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Dustin LaPuma, 27, Rhinelander, Wisconsin was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge William M. Conley to 100 months in prison for knowingly possessing stolen ammunition. LaPuma pleaded guilty to this charge on October 1, 2021.

On August 10, 2020, law enforcement officers from the Oneida County Sheriff’s Office and Rhinelander Police Department encountered LaPuma during a traffic stop in Rhinelander. As one of the officers spoke with LaPuma, he admitted to having a firearm inside of his backpack. The officer determined LaPuma was on probation, searched LaPuma’s backpack, and found a pistol loaded with two rounds of Creedmore 9 mm ammunition.

During a post-arrest interview, LaPuma told officers that he received the loaded firearm after a party. LaPuma initially claimed he did not know the firearm was stolen; however, he later said that he knew someone took the firearm from the owner’s vehicle. LaPuma also told officers that someone offered him one gram of methamphetamine as payment for taking custody of the stolen firearm and ammunition.

At sentencing, Judge Conley highlighted LaPuma’s criminal history as a factor that supported a significant term of imprisonment. Judge Conley also noted that the firearm, a semi-automatic pistol capable of accepting a large capacity magazine,

could have been used to hurt someone.

The charge against LaPuma was the result of an investigation conducted by the Oneida County Sheriff's Office, Rhinelander Police Department, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Assistant U.S. Attorney Chadwick M. Elgersma prosecuted this case.