



Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for the City of New York

Bridget G. Brennan, Special Narcotics Prosecutor

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Regulatory Inspection of Smoke Shop on the Lower East Side Results in Seizure of Over 13 Pounds of Cocaine: One Arrest

A regulatory inspection of a smoke shop suspected of distributing cannabis without proper licensing resulted in the seizure of approximately six kilograms (over 13 pounds) of crack cocaine on Friday, August 9, 2024. MAZEN TAHHAN was allegedly standing behind the counter when members of the New York City Sherriff's Joint Compliance Task Force ("Joint Task Force") arrived at the shop, located at 20 Clinton Street in Manhattan's Lower East Side. Following a search of the location, Field Intelligence Officers with the New York City Police Department's 7th Precinct arrested TAHHAN.

Bridget G. Brennan, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, and New York City Police Commissioner Edward Caban announced the arrest today following an arraignment in Manhattan Criminal Court over the weekend. A criminal complaint filed by the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor charges TAHHAN with Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the First and Third Degrees and Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia in the Second Degree.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan said, "This case demonstrates the importance of collaborative efforts to address the proliferation of illegal cannabis shops. We will continue to investigate whether cannabis shops are concealing dangerous narcotic drugs to protect the health and safety of our communities."

Police Commissioner Edward Caban said, "The safe sale and distribution of legal cannabis in New York City requires a licensed, regulated, and standardized industry. When unlicensed cannabis operators allegedly run afoul of the law, they pose a public safety and health risk to our communities and destabilize the legal industry. The NYPD and our task force partners will continue using every resource available to enforce existing regulations and, most importantly, to protect New Yorkers from all manner of illicit drugs."

The Joint Task Force is comprised of members of the Sherriff's Office, the New York City Police Department (NYPD), and the New York City Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP). The NYPD's Narcotics Borough Manhattan South and Midtown North Precinct assisted with the investigation.

On August 9, 2024, at approximately 12:45 p.m., members of the Joint Task Force arrived at 20 Clinton Street. TAHHAN was allegedly the only person in the shop, with packaging for cannabis products and other cannabis paraphernalia nearby in plain view.

Officers entered an office space in the back of the store and saw a large quantity of alleged crack cocaine inside large zip lock bags and white plastic containers. Also present in the office were multiple scales, thousands of empty glassine envelopes and plastic capsules, and hundreds of empty paper films, all allegedly used for packaging narcotics. Officers allegedly recovered the keys to the shop and \$1,876 cash from TAHHAN's person.

An NYPD field test identified the narcotics seized as cocaine. TAHHAN was arraigned in Manhattan Criminal Court on Saturday, August 10, 2024, where a judge set bail \$50,000 cash/\$150,000 bond.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan thanked Manhattan District Attorney Alvin L. Bragg, Jr. and commended SNP's Trial Division, the NYPD's 7th Precinct Field Intelligence Officers, the New York City Sherriff's Joint Compliance Task Force, and the NYPD's Narcotics Borough Manhattan South and Midtown North Precinct for their work on the investigation.

Defendant	Charges
Masen Tahhan	CPCS 1 st – 1 ct
Brooklyn, NY	CPCS 3 rd – 1 ct
37	Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia 2 nd – 2 cts

The charges and allegations are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.