

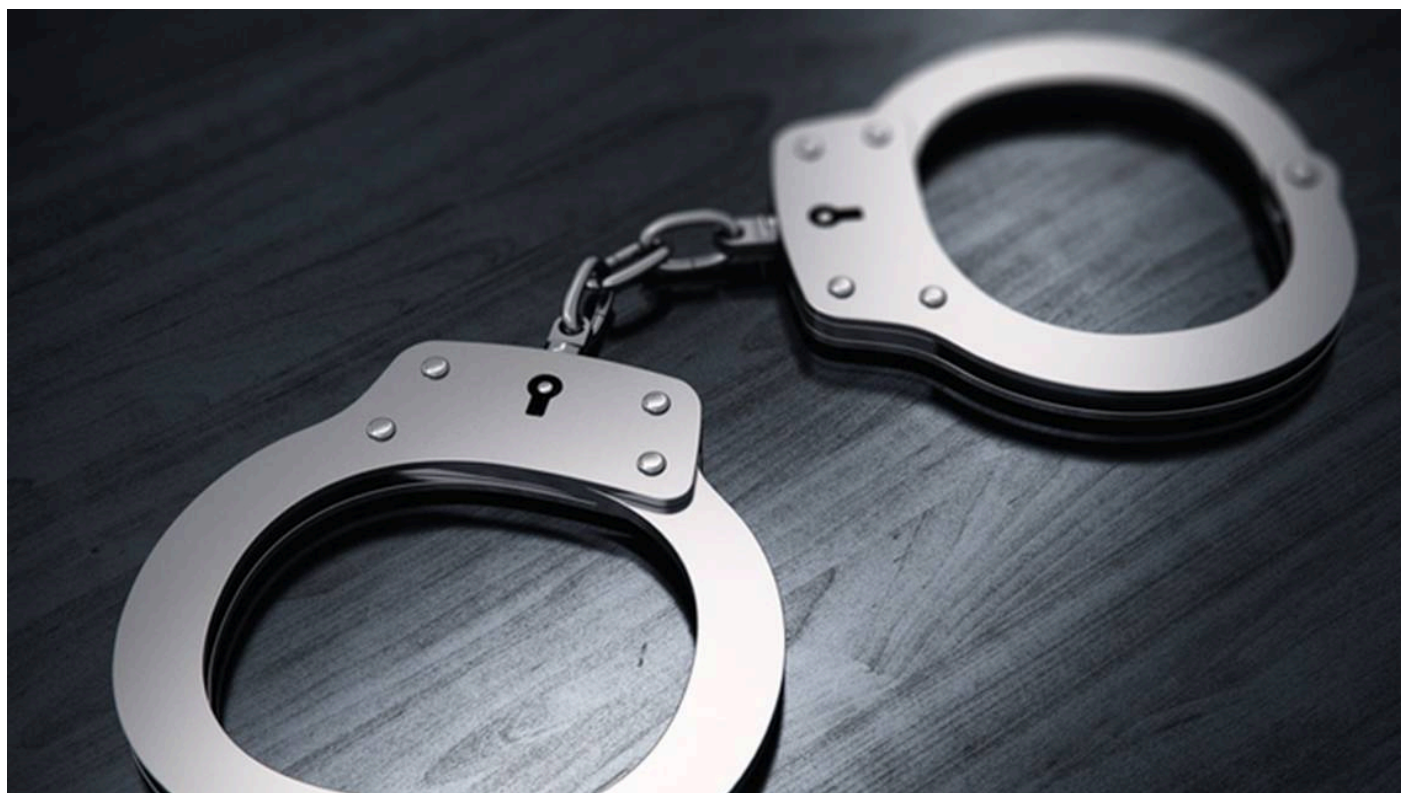


## CRIME

## Durham man charged with death by distribution in overdose case. Is that common in NC?

By Lexi Solomon

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David Allen Bonita, 34, is charged with death by distribution in the March 29, 2023, death of Arman Guerra Imani, 32, according to a Carrboro Police Department news release. Bonita allegedly sold and delivered fentanyl to Imani, who died after injecting it, Bonita's arrest warrant states.

Imani was found unresponsive by his mother in the bathroom of his East Winmore Avenue home shortly before 3 p.m. that day, according to an investigative report from the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. He was last known to be alive around midnight.

Imani's cause of death was an accidental overdose due to "acute ethanol, fentanyl, gabapentin, methadone and mitragynine toxicity," the medical examiner's investigative report states.

Bonita's arrest warrant was issued on Oct. 31, but he was not arrested by members of the Carolinas Regional U.S. Marshals Task Force until Tuesday, police said. He is being held in the Orange County Detention Center on \$150,000 secured bond, records show.

## **Fentanyl deaths, death by distribution charges in the Triangle**

Bonita's arrest mirrors another recent case in Carrboro in which Jeremiah Hargrove, 20, of Selma was charged with death by distribution in the June 27, 2023, death of Serguei Ndinga Momo, 21, [The News & Observer previously reported](#). Momo also overdosed on fentanyl, police said.

The [most recent data](#) from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services shows that as of July, there were 169 fentanyl-positive deaths throughout the state, a decrease from the 262 fentanyl-positive deaths North Carolina had seen by July 2023. In Orange County, there had been nine fentanyl-positive deaths as of Nov. 25., the [department reported](#). That's a decline from the 26 fentanyl-positive deaths in the county from January to August 2023, data shows.

Death by distribution charges remain relatively uncommon throughout the state and the Triangle, statewide data shows.

Throughout North Carolina, 54 death by distribution charges were filed from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, according to data obtained by The N&O from the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts. During that same period, no new

death by distribution charges were filed in Orange or Durham counties, and only one new charge was filed in Wake County.

## A born naturalist and animal lover

Imani, a graduate of East Chapel Hill High School who attended UNC-Wilmington, was described by loved ones [in his obituary](#) as “a born naturalist.” The 32-year-old animal lover was passionate about politics and social justice and enjoyed gardening, fishing, cooking and searching for edible plants in the woods, according to his obituary.

“He wanted to change the paradigm on how Substance Use Disorder (SUD) is treated in the US, allowing for a more open spectrum of treatment options,” the obituary states.

Above all, Imani’s legacy is the kindness he showed to those around him, his obituary says.

“The one enduring trait that people will remember about Arman was his kindness,” the obituary said. “In keeping with Arman’s way of life, in lieu of flowers or gifts, we ask that you convey kindness unto others, especially those who are in need.”

*David Raynor contributed.*

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