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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ATHENS, Ohio – James Barr, 37, of Glouster, was sentenced to up to seven and a half years in prison on Wednesday after pleading guilty in Athens County Common Pleas Court to 16 felonies.

Barr signed a plea agreement stating that five years of the sentence are mandatory. The remaining two and a half years could be imposed at the discretion of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections based on his conduct while incarcerated.

Judge Patrick Lang ordered five years of mandatory post-release control in the case and restitution in the amount of \$12,000 be paid to a victim. Additionally, \$1,441 in Barr's possession was ordered forfeit as the funds were gained in commission of criminal acts.

The plea agreement resolves three cases pending against Barr. In November of 2019, Barr possessed jewelry known to be stolen and valued at \$12,000. He was charged with receiving stolen property. The Athens County Sheriff's Office discovered the jewelry went missing after the cleaning company Nice & Neat, with which Barr was employed, had conducted services at the victim's home. Time sheets and assignment logs indicated Barr was at the home at the time of the theft.

“The Athens County Sheriff's Office did a fantastic job investigating this case,” said Assistant Prosecutor Meg Saunders. “The evidence gathered was clear as to Mr. Barr's role in this crime.”

In September, November and December of 2019, Barr possessed and/or trafficked in heroin, methamphetamine and hydrocodone and was charged with possession of and aggravated possession of drugs and heroin as well as trafficking in heroin. While those cases were pending, Barr was found to be trafficking in heroin while also possessing drugs and fentanyl-related compounds in June and July and additional charges were filed. Saunders noted that Deputy D.J. McCollister was instrumental in his work investigating the drug-related crimes.

“These criminal acts all revolved around the drug activity conducted by Mr. Barr. Drug misuse often leads to various crimes taking place and that leads to more victims,” said Athens County Prosecutor Keller Blackburn. “Meg Saunders and the investigators in this case worked diligently to see this case to its conclusion and Mr. Barr will have to pay his debt to society through restitution and incarceration for at least the next five years.”

