

CRIMINAL POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE
FIRST DEGREE
(A-I Felony)
(Four Ounces or More of a Narcotic Drug)
PENAL LAW 220.21(1)
(Committed on or after Sept. 1, 1979)

The _____ count is Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the First Degree.

Under our law, a person is guilty of Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the First Degree when that person knowingly and unlawfully possesses one or more preparations, compounds, mixtures or substances of an aggregate weight of four ounces or more containing a narcotic drug.

Some of the terms used in this definition have their own special meaning in our law. I will now give you the meaning of the following terms: “narcotic drug,” “possess,” “knowingly,” “unlawfully,” and “aggregate weight.”¹

The term NARCOTIC DRUG includes (specify).²

POSSESS means to have physical possession or otherwise to exercise dominion or control over tangible property.³

A person KNOWINGLY possesses one or more preparations, compounds, mixtures or substances of an aggregate weight of four ounces or more containing a (specify) when that person is aware that he or she is in possession of such a substance in that quantity. Thus, the person must be aware both that the substance he or she is possessing contains (specify) and that, in the aggregate, the substance weighs four ounces or more.⁴

A person UNLAWFULLY possesses (specify) when that person has no legal right to possess it.⁵ Under our law, with certain exceptions not applicable here, a person has no legal right to possess (specify).

Where necessary, include the definition of “ounce” which means “an avoirdupois ounce as applied to solids or semi-solids, and a fluid ounce as applied to liquids” (Penal Law § 220.00[3]).

See, Penal Law § 220.00(7).

See, Penal Law § 10.00(8). Where constructive possession is alleged, or where the People rely on a statutory presumption of possession, insert the appropriate instruction as found in the “Additional Charges” section at the end of this chapter.

See, Penal Law § 15.05(2) and *People v Ryan*, 82 NY2d 497 (1993).

See, Penal Law § 220.00(2) and Public Health Law § 3396(1).

AGGREGATE WEIGHT refers to the weight of the substance which contains the (specify), irrespective of the amount of the (specify) actually in the substance.⁶

In order for you to find the defendant guilty of this crime, the People are required to prove, from all the evidence in the case, beyond a reasonable doubt, both of the following two elements:

1. That on or about (date), in the county of (county), the defendant, (defendant's name), possessed one or more preparations, compounds, mixtures or substances of an aggregate weight of four ounces or more containing (specify); and
2. That the defendant did so knowingly and unlawfully.

Therefore, if you find that the People have proven beyond a reasonable doubt both of those elements, you must find the defendant guilty of the crime of Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the First Degree as charged in the ___ count.

On the other hand, if you find that the People have not proven beyond a reasonable doubt either one or both of those elements, you must find the defendant not guilty of the crime of Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the First Degree as charged in the ___ count.

See, People v Mendoza, 81 NY2d 963, 965 (1993)