

United States Court of Appeals
For the Eighth Circuit

No. 25-3307

United States of America

Plaintiff - Appellee

v.

Darren D. Duncan

Defendant - Appellant

Appeal from United States District Court
for the District of Nebraska - Lincoln

Submitted: July 30, 2026

Filed: August 4, 2026

[Unpublished]

Before LOKEN, L.R. SMITH, and BENTON, Circuit Judges.

PER CURIAM.

Darren Duncan appeals challenging the sufficiency of the evidence after a jury found him guilty of distributing fentanyl and the district court¹ imposed a sentence

¹The Honorable Susan M. Bazis, United States District Judge for the District of Nebraska.

within the United States Sentencing Guidelines range. Having jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 1291, this court affirms.

Upon careful review, this court finds no basis for reversal. *See United States v. Oliver*, 90 F.4th 1222, 1224–25 (8th Cir. 2024) (standard of review). In light of the evidence presented at trial—including the witness testimony, text messages, and autopsy report—this court concludes that a rational trier of fact could have found beyond a reasonable doubt that Duncan knowingly gave the victim a controlled substance. *See United States v. Campbell*, 986 F.3d 782, 809 (8th Cir. 2021) (describing elements to sustain conviction for distribution of a controlled substance); *United States v. Cooper*, 990 F.3d 576, 582 (8th Cir. 2021) (government does not need to prove that defendant knew the exact nature of the substance in possession, “only that it was a controlled substance of some kind”); *United States v. Cheshier*, 134 F.4th 534, 538 (8th Cir. 2025) (defendant distributed fentanyl to victim where text messages showed he discussed distributing fentanyl with the victim, defendant stated in body camera footage that he suggested to victim that they do drugs, and, after defendant offered victim pills from his bag, victim grabbed them and took too many).

The judgment is affirmed.
