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NEWS

Ex-LAPD Officer Follows Son To Prison On Child Porn Charges

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(credit: CBS)

LOS ANGELES (CBS) — A former LAPD officer whose son was convicted on child pornography charges was sentenced on Tuesday to eight months in prison for the same crime.

John Robert Deegan, 55, must also serve four months in home detention, pay a \$3,000 fine and spend seven years in supervised release.

A year ago, the defendant's son, Jonathon Deegan, 29, was sentenced in Los Angeles federal court to eight years in prison and 30

years of supervised release.

U.S. District Judge Jacqueline H. Nguyen said there were a number of mitigating factors resulting in the relatively lenient sentence given to the elder Deegan.

The judge pointed to the small number of illicit images found on Deegan's computer and the fact that the pictures were "not as egregious" as material found in similar cases.

However, she added, each time such an image is downloaded, "the child is victimized again."

Nguyen also mentioned Deegan's "lifetime of exceptional service to the community in a very tough neighborhood" and the low likelihood he would commit any future crimes of the same nature.

"This is a difficult sentencing," Nguyen said, noting that Deegan's background as a police officer "makes him vulnerable" to abuse while in prison.

Father and son were indicted by a Los Angeles federal grand jury in September 2009.

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The younger Deegan was initially charged with receiving, possessing and distributing child pornography, while his father was charged with receipt and possession.

Both eventually pleaded guilty to possession of child porn.

"I regret my actions and I take full responsibility," John Robert Deegan told the court Tuesday.

Federal investigators first came to suspect the younger Deegan — who had no previous criminal history — of trading pornographic pictures and videos on the Internet, according to court documents.

When FBI agents served a search warrant at the Long Beach home he shared with his father — then an LAPD Central Division patrol officer — they found 600 images on his computer of children, some as young as 4 years old, involved in sex acts with adults, prosecutors said.

They also found a small amount of child pornography on his father's computer.

Deegan, who was an LAPD officer for almost 25 years, is no longer employed by the department.

"He paid a steep price for the conduct that led to a conviction of this nature," the judge said.

Investigators were able to identify some of the children in the pictures, none of whom are from Southern California, and the Deegans are not suspected of ever contacting them, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office.

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