

Child-porn charges get former police officer life sentence

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[2015 Cop Pedophile Child Porn](#): Micheal Edwin Harding

FORT PIERCE — A former police Officer of the Year in St. Lucie County was sentenced to life in prison Monday after being convicted of child exploitation, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Miami said.

Micheal Edwin Harding a former officer with the Fort Pierce and Port St. Lucie police departments, pleaded guilty in February to possession and distribution of material involving sexual exploitation of minors, attempting to coerce and enticing a minor to engage in sexual activity and production of child pornography.

On Monday, Harding, 28, received a life sentence in federal court for trying a engage minor in sexual activity.

According to court documents, Harding posted multiple images and videos to a chat room on a popular social media application between July 23 and Aug. 4, 2015. The images — later found to be on Harding's phone — depicted children engaging in sexually explicit acts.

Federal Homeland Security investigators searched Harding's home Sept. 22, seizing his computer, his cellphone and a thumb drive.

Harding was named Officer of the Year in 2011, when he was a member of the Fort Pierce Police Department. He joined the force in Port St. Lucie in 2012.