

Ex-JSO officer arrested on child porn charges

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2016 Cop Pedophile Michael Williams

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. - A former Jacksonville Sheriff's Officer is facing child pornography charges after federal agents discovered he was paying a woman for pornographic images of her 3-year-old daughter, U.S. Attorney A. Lee Bentley III announced Monday.

Michael Eugene Williams, 59, is charged with publishing a notice seeking child pornography, receipt of child pornography and possession of child pornography.

If convicted on all counts, Williams, who is not related to Sheriff Mike Williams, faces a minimum mandatory term of 20 years, up to 60 years, in federal prison.

According to the criminal complaint, on July 7, officers from the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office executed a search warrant at Williams's home after receiving information that he was uploading child pornography for sharing to Google Drive.

"They did not try to brush it under the table or anything," News4Jax crime and safety analyst Gil Smith said. "They acted very quickly and got the federal agencies involved also."

Smith said Williams didn't get any special treatment just because he was a former police officer.

"Zero tolerance no matter who, and I'm glad that they acted quickly on that," Williams said.

Agents seized Williams' cellphone and a tablet and said that they found Williams had been text messaging a woman in Texas who was producing pornographic images of her 3-year-old daughter for Williams in exchange for money that Williams wired to her.

The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office was able to identify the woman in Texas and coordinate with federal agents and Texas state agents to secure a search warrant for the woman's home.

During an interview with her, officials said she admitted to sending sexually explicit images of her daughter to Williams in exchange for money. She also said that she had recent contact with Williams using a messaging app.

Law enforcement officers obtained a federal search warrant for Williams's home and seized a cellphone that belonged to him that they said contained additional images of child pornography received from the woman in Texas, as well as explicit chats of sexual conduct Williams wished to engage in with the child.

Williams, who was hired by the Sheriff's Office in 1994 and resigned in 2011, citing personal reasons, has been arrested and is being held pending a detention hearing scheduled before U.S. Magistrate Judge Monte C. Richardson on Friday at 2:30 p.m.

Williams was previously arrested in Clay County in 2010 and 2011 on charges of felony battery and violating a domestic violence injunction three times.

A criminal complaint is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed one or more violations of federal criminal law, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until, proven guilty.

There's no word on what happened to the little girl. Her mother is being prosecuted by the state of Texas, according to authorities.

This case was investigated by Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations.

It is another case brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by the U.S Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who sexually exploit children, and to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.usdoj.gov/psc.

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