



Department of Justice

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LEXINGTON MAN SENTENCED TO 188 MONTHS AND FORFEITS HOME FOR CHILD PORNOGRAPHY VIOLATIONS

Authorities Seized 40,000 images of Child Pornography from Defendant's Home

LEXINGTON, KY - A federal judge sentenced a Lexington man to 188 months in prison for child pornography violations and as part of the sentence the defendant has completely forfeited his interest in his residence located in the Chevy Chase subdivision.

This is the first case in the Eastern District of Kentucky (includes 67 counties) that a defendant has forfeited his home for child pornography violations.

U.S. Senior District Court Judge Karl Forrester sentenced 62-year-old Joseph Robert Leitner for receipt of child pornography. The sentence was the maximum time suggested by the sentencing guidelines prepared by the probation office.

Judge Forrester described the images Leitner possessed as horrific and unimaginable before he imposed the sentence.

Leitner agreed as part of his plea agreement to surrender his home on Cochran Drive. The United States possesses the authority to seize the residence based on the high volume of images and the length of time Leitner used his home to download and view child pornography.

“Mr. Leitner used the privacy of his home to exploit children by downloading and viewing thousands images of child pornography over a period of several years,” said Assistant U.S. Attorney Hydee Hawkins. “This case demonstrates that like those whose homes are forfeited for drug related offenses, individuals who use their homes or other property to exploit children will also be subject to forfeiture of that property used to facilitate crimes against children.”

Prior to the sentence, a 54-year-old man testified before the court that Leitner sexually molested him repeatedly when he was between the ages of three and nine years old.

Leitner pleaded guilty in July and admitted that between March and May of 2008 he downloaded child pornography images. Leitner also acknowledged that he collected images, mostly of teenage boys between 11 and 14 years old, since 2005.

There were approximately 100 CDs and several computers seized during the search of

Leitner's residence in June 2008. Authorities examined the computer and CDs and discovered more than 40,000 images of child pornography that included children as young as six to 10 years old.

The investigation was conducted by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the Kentucky State Police (Electronic Crimes Section), and the Lexington Division of Police.

The United States was represented in the case by Assistant U.S. Attorney Hydee Hawkins and Robert Duncan. This case was brought as part of the Eastern District of Kentucky's efforts pursuant to Project Safe Childhood, a Department of Justice initiative dedicated to protecting children from online exploitation and abuse.

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