



Department of Justice

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Middlesboro Man Sentenced to 300 Months for Child Pornography Offenses

LONDON, Ky. – A former Middlesboro firefighter, Robert Christopher England, 36, was sentenced on Tuesday, to 300 months in federal prison, by U.S. District Judge Claria Horn Boom, after previously being convicted of receiving and possessing child pornography, on a Middlesboro Fire Department laptop.

According to the evidence at trial, England received child pornography on three separate occasions and possessed a collection of over 600 images, between April of 2017 and June 23, 2018. England's fire department laptop was seized, on June 23, 2018, by the Middlesboro Police Department. At the time, England was serving as a Lieutenant within the Middlesboro Fire Department. A forensic review conducted by the Kentucky State Police Electronic Crimes Branch showed evidence of dark web access via Tor Browser and child pornography "playlists" created in ManyCam, a web conferencing program.

The Court found that England possessed images portraying sadistic conduct and children under the age of 12 years. England was also found to have engaged in a pattern of hands-on sexual abuse of a minor and the willful obstruction of justice for deleting his child pornography collection when confronted by law enforcement.

England was convicted in November 2020.

Under federal law, England must serve 85 percent of his prison sentence; and upon his release from prison, he will be under the supervision of the U.S. Probation Office for 20 years.

Carlton S. Shier, IV, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky, James R. Brown, Jr., Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Louisville Division; and Acting Commissioner Col. Phillip Burnette, Jr., Kentucky State Police, jointly announced the sentence.

The investigation was conducted by the FBI, with assistance from the Kentucky State Police Electronic Crimes Branch. The United States was represented in the case by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jenna E. Reed.

This case was prosecuted as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse, launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafchildhood.gov.

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