



**U. S. Department of Justice**

*Jason R. Coody  
United States Attorney  
Northern District of Florida*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Friday, August 9, 2024

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**PANAMA CITY BEACH MAN SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON  
FOR CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

**PENSACOLA, FLORIDA** – Cosme Martin Hernandez, Jr., 34, of Panama City Beach, Florida, was sentenced to 7 years in federal prison after previously pleading guilty to receipt and attempted receipt of child pornography. The sentence was announced by Jason R. Coody, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida.

“There is no greater charge than the protection of our children,” said U.S. Attorney Coody. “This sentence is yet another example of the unwavering commitment to the protection of our most vulnerable and should serve as a significant deterrent to those who would attempt to harm them. We will continue to work tirelessly with our law enforcement partners to investigate and prosecute those who engage in such heinous conduct.”

In December of 2023, law enforcement, conducting covert operations, downloaded files of child pornography which were being actively shared over the internet from Hernandez's residential computer in Panama City Beach. On February 6, 2024, Bay County Sheriff's Office, and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) executed a search warrant at Hernandez's residence. On scene, law enforcement quickly located electronic devices containing child pornography and Hernandez was arrested. Several seized devices were subsequently analyzed by an HSI computer specialist. Hernandez received and possessed over 21,000 images and videos of child pornography in approximately 4 months – said files exploited children as young as toddlers. At the time of offense, Hernandez was an active-duty military member who had served approximately fifteen years in the United States Navy; he has since been discharged under other than honorable conditions.

“This sentence sends a strong message that those who exploit children will face justice,” said Bay County Sheriff Tommy Ford. “Child pornography is not just about images; it's tied to the broader fight against human trafficking. Our collaboration with federal agencies and the U.S. Attorney's Office is crucial to this fight, and we will continue to work together to protect our children and hold these dangerous criminals accountable.”

Hernandez's prison sentence will be followed by 10 years of supervised release. He will be required to register as a sex offender and will be subject to all sex offender conditions. The Court also ordered forfeiture of various electronic devices that he used to commit the offenses.

This conviction was the result of an investigation conducted jointly by the Bay County Sheriff's Office, the Walton County Sheriff's Office, and Homeland Security Investigations. Assistant United States Attorney Jennifer Callahan prosecuted the case.

This case was brought 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 and led by the U.S. Attorney's Offices and the Criminal Divisions Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), it 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.projectsafechildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov).

The United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Florida is one of 94 offices that serve as the nation's principal litigators under the direction of the Attorney General. To access available public court documents online, please visit the [U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida](http://www.uscourts.gov) website. For more information about the United States Attorney's Office, Northern District of Florida, visit <http://www.justice.gov/usao/fln/index.html>.

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