



U. S. Department of Justice

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PENSACOLA MAN SENTENCED TO ELEVEN YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON FOR CHILD EXPLOITATION CRIMES

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA – On Thursday afternoon, David E. Merry, 60, of Pensacola, was sentenced to eleven years in prison on federal charges related to his receipt of child pornography. The sentence, which followed his guilty plea, was announced by Jason R. Coody, Acting United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida.

Court documents reflect, in February 2019, officers with the Pensacola Police Department received information from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children that a particular online account with Google maintained child pornography. Homeland Security Investigations and the Pensacola Police Department were able to geo-locate the criminal activity of Merry to Pensacola. The Pensacola Police Department, through a records check, confirmed that Merry was a suspect in two prior child exploitation investigations in 2016 and 2017. Law enforcement obtained a search warrant for Merry's Google account, identifying the child pornography he maintained in the cloud. Law enforcement then obtained and executed a search warrant at Merry's residence, resulting in the seizure of multiple electronic devices. A forensic review of the seized items revealed thousands of images of child pornography. Merry was arrested and released on bond conditions. While on release, probation officers suspected that Merry continued his illicit activity, and federal agents were able to seize his newly obtained cellular telephone and search it pursuant to a warrant. Additional images of child pornography were located, and Merry was taken into custody without bond. He has been in custody awaiting sentencing since that time.

During the sentencing hearing, United States District Court Judge M. Casey Rodgers considered a prior offense in which Merry was identified as having sexually exploited a minor female.

"The abuse committed by this child predator has come to an end as a result of the vigilant efforts of our law enforcement partners," stated Acting U.S. Attorney Coody. "We will continue to work tirelessly with our law enforcement partners to ensure that those who engage in such heinous conduct will be held accountable for their actions."

"Merry will now face accountability for his continued delight in the disgusting images of children being exploited," said Acting Special Agent in Charge Kevin Sibley, who oversees Homeland

Security Investigations (HSI) operations in Northern Florida. “Every time one of these images is shared or viewed it revictimizes an innocent person.”

“This sentence is an example of the great partnership between Pensacola Police and the U.S. Department of Justice,” said Pensacola Police Chief Eric Randall. This team is determined to hold those fully accountable who seek to do harm to our children.”

Following his 11-year term of imprisonment, Merry will be supervised by the United States Probation Office for the rest of his life.

The case was investigated by United States Homeland Security Investigations, the Pensacola Police Department, and the North Florida Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys David L. Goldberg and Meredith L. Steer.

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 public court documents online, please visit the [U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida](#) 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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