



Department of Justice

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Bourbon County Man Sentenced to 15 Years for Production of Child Pornography

LEXINGTON, Ky.— A Paris, Ky., man, Joseph Moctezuma Lopez, 28, was sentenced to 180 months in federal prison on Monday, by U.S. District Judge Joseph Hood, after pleading guilty to production of child pornography.

According to Lopez's plea agreement, in or before August 2017, he admitted to meeting a minor victim online and communicating with her over social media applications and the Internet for over two years. In September 2019, Lopez traveled from Lexington, to the Canadian border to meet the victim; but he was stopped at the border. Law enforcement found explicit photographs of the victim on his phones, which Lopez admitted he enticed the victim into producing.

Lopez pleaded guilty in November 2021.

Under federal law, Lopez must serve 85 percent of his prison sentence. Upon his release from prison, he will be under the supervision of the U.S. Probation Office for life.

Carlton S. Shier, IV, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky; Jerry Templet, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations (HSI); and Chief Lawrence Weathers, Lexington Police Department, jointly announced the sentence.

The investigation was conducted by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) – Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and the Lexington Police Department. The United States was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys David Marye and Andrea Mattingly Williams.

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.projectsafefchildhood.gov.

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