



## U. S. Department of Justice

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

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **MICHIGAN SEX OFFENDER SENTENCED TO THIRTY-FIVE YEARS** **FOR ENTICING AN OKALOOSA COUNTY CHILD** **TO PRODUCE CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

**PENSACOLA, FLORIDA** – Frank Leon Stapleton, 45, of Ypsilanti, Michigan, was sentenced in federal court today to thirty-five years' imprisonment for enticement of a minor, production of child pornography, and transfer of obscene matter to a minor. The sentenced was announced by Jason R. Coody, Acting United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida.

In June 2019, the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office was contacted regarding communications of a sexual nature between an unknown individual and a 9-year old girl via the internet. Deputies observed text communications on the child's cellphone wherein the individual enticed the child to produce child pornography of herself, then directed that explicit images and videos be sent to him. The individual also transmitted images and videos of adults engaged in sex acts to the child. Through collaborative efforts, deputies and agents with Homeland Security Investigations identified the individual as Frank Leon Stapleton, a previously convicted sex offender who was at the time on supervised release as a result of a prior federal conviction involving his possession of child pornography in Michigan.

"There is no greater charge than the protection of our children," stated Acting U.S. Attorney Coody. "Acts of such depravity, committed by a previously convicted sex offender while under court-ordered supervision, highlight the danger to our most vulnerable. We will continue to work tirelessly with our law enforcement partners to investigate and prosecute those who prey upon our children."

"This child predator was brought to justice via a collaborative effort between HSI Pensacola, HSI Detroit, and our partners with the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office, highlighting the important work of the North Florida Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force," said HSI Jacksonville Assistant Special Agent in Charge K. Jim Phillips.

The case was investigated by Homeland Security Investigations, the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office, and the North Florida Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jeffrey M. Tharp.

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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