

41-year old Massachusetts man charged with distributing child pornography

"A Ludlow man has been arrested for a child pornography offense.

Robert Avrett, 41, was charged with distribution of child pornography. Avrett was arrested on Nov. 21, 2022 and was detained following an initial appearance yesterday before U.S. District Court Magistrate Judge Katherine A. Robertson.

According to the charging document, Avrett was identified as the owner of a Kik messenger account that shared numerous videos containing child sexual abuse material (CSAM) to an undercover law enforcement agent. The CSAM Avrett allegedly distributed depicted the sexual exploitation of minor victims as young as approximately three-years-old. During search of Avrett's residence on Nov. 21, 2022, Avrett admitted that he was the operator of the Kik messenger account and that he used the account to share and receive CSAM.

The charge of distribution of child pornography provides for a mandatory minimum sentence of five years and up to 20 years in prison, at least five years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins and Matthew B. Millhollin, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in New England made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorney Catherine G. Curley of Rollins' Springfield Branch Office is prosecuting 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. Led by the U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the DOJ's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/psc>.

The details contained in the charging document are allegations. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law." -Massachusetts Department of Justice.