

# Level 3 Sex Offender from Boston sentenced to prison for soliciting children on Tik Tok

*Boston man was sentenced today for coercing a minor he found on TikTok to send him child sexual abuse material.*

“Hector Acevedo, 33, of Jamaica Plain, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Patti B. Saris to 22 years in prison and five years of supervised release. In October 2023, Acevedo pleaded guilty to one count of receipt of child pornography by a recidivist.

Acevedo, a Level 3 registered sex offender, was previously convicted in Suffolk County Superior Court on multiple child and sexual exploitation offenses including trafficking of a person for sexual servitude, extortion by threat of injury, posing or exhibiting a child in state of nudity or sexual conduct, dissemination of matter harmful to minors, dissemination of child pornography and purchase or possession of child pornography. On Feb. 13, 2018, Acevedo was sentenced to five-to-seven years in state prison and three years of probation.

Just months after his release from prison, while on state probation, Acevedo contacted a 13-year-old girl via TikTok, claiming to be a 17-year-old boy, and asked for her phone number. He then began texting the victim, asking her to send nude pictures of herself to him, and eventually coerced the victim to engage in sexual conduct over video chat. Acevedo also asked for her address, although she did not give it to him. He later solicited other children online on other platforms, pretending to be a pre-teen or teenage girl, and

asked them to provide him with nude pictures.

Acting United States Attorney Joshua S. Levy; Jodi Cohen, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division; and Boston Police Commissioner Michael Cox made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by the Arlington and Revere Police Departments. Assistant U.S. Attorney Elianna J. Nuzum of the Major Crimes Unit 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. 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>."-Massachusetts Department of Justice.

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## **After 30 years of service New Bedford Police Officer Mike Boswell retires**

"We'd like to thank Ofc. Mike Boswell for over 30 years of service to the NBPD.

Ofc. Boswell started his career as a police officer on June 27, 1993. His sons, Bryce and Alex, followed in his footsteps by both becoming police officers for local departments before

graduating from the Massachusetts State Police academy (84th and 87th RTT) and becoming state troopers.

Ofc. Boswell's last day included a closing radio call to conclude his service, where he was joined by his family and brothers of the NBPD. Please join us in wishing him a happy and healthy retirement!"-City of New Bedford Police Department.

**Video by City of New Bedford Police Department:**

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## **New Bedford man charged with nine counts of lying on firearm purchase application**

"An indictment, information, or complaint is merely an allegation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Attorney General Peter F. Neronha today announced that a Massachusetts man has been charged in Third Division District Court in Warwick with providing false information while purchasing multiple firearms, following an investigation by the Office of the Attorney General.

On January 25, 2024, investigators from the Office of the Attorney General arrested Maxwell Williams (age 34) of New Bedford, Mass. and charged him with nine counts of providing false information while attempting to secure a firearm.

As alleged in the complaint, on December 10, 2023, the

defendant attempted to purchase a firearm from East Bay Ammunition LLC in Tiverton and was subsequently denied after a National Instant Background Check System (NICS) check returned results flagging that the defendant is prohibited from possessing a firearm because he is the subject of a qualifying protection order.

As alleged in the complaint, following further investigation, RIAG investigators learned that the defendant provided a false address on nine applications to purchase firearms in a four-month window between August and November 2023. The defendant is a resident of New Bedford Massachusetts, where he has resided since 2018, but used a suspended driver's license listing a former address in Coventry while purchasing the guns.

As further alleged in court documents, investigators learned that the defendant was arrested in November 2023 in Seekonk, Mass. stemming from a single vehicle crash involving the defendant where he was charged with carrying a firearm without a license after police officers seized a Glock 9mm semi-automatic handgun from him.

As alleged in court documents, the defendant purchased six of the guns from East Bay Ammunition LLC, including three Glock semi-automatic handguns, two Palmetto State Armory semi-automatic rifles, and a Springfield Hellcat 9mm semi-automatic handgun. The defendant also purchased two guns from D&L Shooting Supplies, including a Mossberg 715 .22 caliber semi-automatic rifle and a Glock 43, 9mm semi-automatic handgun.

"As alleged, this case is yet another example of our investigators working to protect the public by holding accountable those who obtain guns illegally," said Attorney General Neronha. "Those individuals who need to break the law to acquire guns are the same individuals who pose the greatest risk of committing violent gun crimes, and there will continue to be consequences for violators. I want to thank the

investigators from this Office's Bureau of Criminal Investigation Unit for their exceptional work here."

The defendant is scheduled for a pre-arraignment conference on May 9, 2024, in Kent County Superior Court."-Attorney General Peter F. Neronha's Office.

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## **Absentee, mail-in ballots available in New Bedford for March Presidential Primary**

"NEW BEDFORD – The New Bedford Election Commission is making available absentee and mail-in ballots for the March 5 Presidential Primary election.

Any registered voter can request to receive a mail-in or absentee ballot by visiting the Election Commission office at City Hall, 133 William St., during business hours, Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Request forms have been mailed to registered voters in New Bedford.

If the request form is being mailed back to the Election Commission office, it must be received by Feb. 27 at 5 p.m. Forms can also be returned in person at the office until March 4 at 12 p.m. Request forms, and an online tool to submit a request, are also available on the Mass. Secretary of State's website,

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/divisions/elections/voting-information/vote-by-mail.htm>.

All completed absentee or mail-in ballots must be returned to the Election Office by 8 p.m. on Election Day, March 5, to be

counted. They can be mailed back, hand delivered to the Election Commission Office at City Hall, or placed in the drop-off boxes outside City Hall or on Elm Street by the bus terminal.

In the Presidential Primary on Tuesday, March 5, New Bedford voters may cast their vote for president, state committee man, state committee woman, and ward committee.

Early in-person voting for the primary begins on Feb. 24. More information about early voting schedule and locations is forthcoming.

Any New Bedford resident who is uncertain about their voting status, designated polling location, has changed their address since the last election, or has other questions about the election can contact the Board of Election Commissioners at 508-979-1420."-City of New Bedford.

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## **Massachusetts Police investigating death of toddler who did not receive immediate medical aid**

The Massachusetts State Police and the Winthrop Fire and Police Departments are investigating after a two-year-old died after not receiving immediate emergency medical aid.

The Winthrop Fire and Police Departments were sent to a home on 26 Pleasant Street at 10:00 a.m. on Friday after receiving a report of a toddler needing immediate emergency medical aid.

The toddler was taken to Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston for her injuries.

At 10:30 a.m., Troopers from the State Police Detective Unit for Suffolk County and State Police Crime Scene Services Section were asked to assist in the investigation.

At 11:19am, Mass General Hospital had notified police that the child passed away in spite of life-saving measures.

After a preliminary investigation, it was discovered that the child had had an illness in recent days and was at home with her mother who called 911 to report an apparent medical emergency involving the child at 10:00 a.m.

Winthrop Police Chief Terence Delehanty said, "The fire department did a heroic job today and made decisive decisions under emergency conditions to get this child the medical treatment necessary as soon as possible."

Incidentally, the call came from the home of former Winthrop Police Lt. James Feeley, who was charged last month with child rape and indecent assault and battery on a child and has been behind bars since December.

A post-mortem assessment of the toddler will be conducted by the Chief Medical Examiner in order to determine the cause and manner of her death. This child death investigation remains open pending that determination.

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# After spate of burglaries breaking into cars New Bedford Police offer tips for residents

"? The NBPD would like to remind residents to please lock you car doors at night and offer some helpful tips that you can do to protect yourself from having your car broken into and personal property stolen:

- ? Always roll up vehicle windows and lock all doors.
- ? Hide your personal belongings. If you leave property visible in your vehicle, your vehicle is automatically a target.
- ? Store items in your trunk before you arrive on-site; avoid storing items in your trunk after you park.
- ? Park in a well-lit area.
- ? Keep cell phone cords and other electronic accessories out of sight. Burglars are willing to break a window when they see a cord because there is a chance that a device will be in the vehicle.
- ? Burglars are able to detect the Bluetooth signal on electronic devices. Place your electronics in airplane mode or turn off the Bluetooth/Wi-Fi option, then power off your electronic devices. Put away devices before you get to the parking lot.

If you see any suspicious activity, contact us at (508) 991-6300."-City of New Bedford Police Department.





*City of New Bedford Police Department photo.*

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# **Chinese national stalks, threatens Berklee student who promoted freedom, democracy in China**

"A Berklee College of Music student, who is a citizen of the People's Republic of China (PRC), was convicted by a federal jury in Boston today of stalking and threatening an individual

who posted fliers in support of democracy in China around the Berklee campus area.

Xiaolei Wu, 26, was convicted following a four-day jury trial of one count of cyberstalking and one count of interstate transmissions of threatening communication. U.S. District Court Judge Denise J. Casper scheduled sentencing for April 24, 2024. Wu was arrested and charged by criminal complaint in December 2022 and subsequently indicted by a federal grand jury in January 2023.



"No one in this country should ever be subjected to threats of violence or a cyberstalking harassment campaign for expressing their political views. Mr. Wu now stands as a convicted felon for his illegal efforts to suppress speech by a fellow Berklee School of Music student who was critical of the government of China.

This type of conduct will never be tolerated," said Acting United States Attorney Joshua S. Levy. "The Department of Justice is committed to safeguarding the fundamental right to

free speech for all. Our office will hold accountable individuals whose actions threaten or violate this fundamental tenet of our democratic society.”

*“Today’s verdict by a jury in the District of Massachusetts underscores the Department’s commitment to ensuring all U.S. residents are able to freely exercise their fundamental rights,” said Assistant Attorney General Matthew G. Olsen of the Justice Department’s National Security Division.*



“What Xiaolei Wu did in attempting to silence and intimidate an activist who expressed dissension with the ruling Communist

Party of China is not only criminal, but completely against our country's democratic values," said Jodi Cohen, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division. "Today's conviction upholds one of our most fundamental rights –freedom of speech –and the FBI will ensure that anyone who tries to infringe on this right using threats or harassment will face the same fate as Mr. Wu."

On Oct. 22, 2022, while Wu was attending the Berklee College of Music, an individual posted a flier on or near the Berklee College of Music campus which said, "Stand with Chinese People," as well as, "We Want Freedom," and "We Want Democracy." Beginning on or about Oct. 22, 2022, and continuing until Oct. 24, 2022, Wu made a series of communications via WeChat, email and Instagram directed towards the victim who posted the flier. Among other things, Wu said, "Post more, I will chop your bastard hands off." He also told the victim that he had informed the public security agency in China about the victim's actions and that the public security agency in China would "greet" the victim's family. Additionally, Wu solicited others to find out where the victim was living, publicly posted the victim's email address in the hopes that others would abuse the victim online, and he reported the victim's information back to a member of the Chinese government.

The charge of cyberstalking provides for a sentence up to five years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. The charge of interstate transmissions of threatening communication provides for a sentence up to five years in prison, three 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.

Acting U.S. Attorney Levy, AAG Olsen and FBI SAC Cohen made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Timothy H.

Kistner and Alatheia E. Porter of the National Security Unit are prosecuting the case with the assistance of Counterintelligence and Export Control Section Trial Attorney Menno Goedman.”-Massachusetts Department of Justice.

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## **Boston man pleads guilty to hiring assassin to murder his wife and her boyfriend**

*A Boston man pleaded guilty today to trying to hire a contract killer to murder his wife and the wife's boyfriend.*

“Mohammed Chowdhury, 47, pleaded guilty to two counts of use of interstate commerce facilities in the commission of murder-for-hire. U.S. District Court Judge Leo T. Sorokin scheduled sentencing for April 23, 2024. Chowdhury was arrested and charged in January 2023 and subsequently indicted by a federal grand jury in February 2023. He has remained in federal custody since his arrest.

“Mr. Chowdhury's callousness and disregard for human life is shocking. Not only did he ignore the restraining order filed against him by his wife, he sought to have her and her boyfriend killed,” said Acting United States Attorney Joshua S. Levy. “This case is a stark reminder of the heinous nature of domestic violence and its potential to escalate into unthinkable acts. Violence, especially within the confines of domestic relationships, has no place here in Massachusetts, and we will use every available resource to ensure the safety of those at risk.”





*Massachusetts Department of Justice photo.*

"Mohammed Chowdhury not only wanted to kill his wife; he was willing to kill her new boyfriend too. Given his complete lack of respect for human life, there's no question he belongs behind bars, and today's conviction ensures that will happen," said Jodi Cohen, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division. "FBI Boston's Violent Crimes Task Force worked quickly to disrupt this deadly plot

and is committed to doing everything it can to take violent criminals like Chowdhury off the street for the safety of all Bostonians.”

In November 2022, an individual notified law enforcement that Chowdhury was soliciting assistance in having his wife murdered. The individual said that Chowdhury had paid someone to conduct the murder for hire, but that they took the money and did not follow through with Chowdhury’s request. Chowdhury subsequently told the individual that he needed the murder done as soon as possible and that he would get the money to do so, even robbing a store if necessary to obtain the funds. The individual provided Chowdhury’s phone number to law enforcement, who thereafter used an undercover agent posing as a contract killer to communicate with Chowdhury about his murder for hire plot.

On numerous occasions in December 2022 and January 2023, Chowdhury met with undercover agents posing as the contract killer and their associates, to seek help with killing his wife and her new boyfriend, whom she left him for. During these meetings and communications, Chowdhury explained that his wife wouldn’t let him see his children and that he wanted the undercover agents to rob and beat his wife and her boyfriend so that he would not be a suspect. Chowdhury asked, “So how we gonna disappear his, uh, body?” and stated, “No evidence. No evidence. No evidence from like, you know, that, uh, I did something, you know?” Chowdhury provided the undercover agents with photographs of his wife and her new boyfriend, where they lived, where they worked and their work schedules. Chowdhury ultimately agreed to pay \$4,000 per murder, with a deposit of \$500.





*Massachusetts Department of Justice photo.*

Chowdhury met with the undercover agents on Jan. 17, 2023, provided the \$500 deposit and confirmed that he wanted the murders committed. Chowdhury was then immediately taken into federal custody.

In October 2019, Chowdhury was charged in Boston Municipal Court – Roxbury Division with violating an Abuse Prevention Order prohibiting him from abusing, contacting, or coming within a certain distance of his wife. Chowdhury pleaded to sufficient facts and received a continuance without a finding.

The charging statute provides for a sentence of up to 10 years in prison, three 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.

Acting U.S. Attorney Levy and FBI SAC Cohen made the announcement today. The Boston Police Department provided valuable assistance with the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Luke A. Goldworm and John T. Dawley of the Criminal Division are prosecuting the case.”-Massachusetts Department of Justice.

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## **Dominican previously arrested for distributing Fentanyl, cocaine sentenced for illegal reentry**

“A Lawrence man was sentenced in federal court in Boston to illegally reentering the United States after been deported.

Francisco Araujo Lara, 33, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Indira Talwani to 51 months in prison and three years of supervised release. In October 2023, Araujo Lara pleaded guilty to one count of unlawful reentry of a deported alien.

Araujo Lara, a citizen on the Dominican Republic, was deported from the United States in September 2019, after serving an 18-to-30-month state sentence for a fentanyl distribution. Sometime thereafter, Araujo Lara unlawfully reentered the United States. In 2021, he was arrested in Lawrence for distributing fentanyl and possessing cocaine with the intent to distribute it. Araujo Lara pleaded guilty to the state charges and was sentenced to 30 months in state prison.

Acting United States Attorney Joshua S. Levy and Todd M. Lyons, Field Office Director, Boston, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Enforcement and Removal Operations made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorney David G. Tobin of the Major Crimes Unit prosecuted the case."-Massachusetts Department of Justice.

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## **City of New Bedford has roadwork sites for the upcoming week of January 29, 2024 – February 2, 2024**

"The City of New Bedford has roadwork sites for the upcoming week of January 29, 2024 – February 2, 2024, and they are as follows:

**Eversource will be working on gas main relays and services on:**

- Main relay on Barkers Ln including intersection of Acushnet Ave
  - Main relay on Central Ave from Church St to Brook St
  - Main relay on County St from Cove St to Mosher St
  - Main relay on Mosher St from County St to Crapo St
  - Main relay on W Rodney French Blvd from Calumet St to Bayview St
- Project: Phase 4 Transmission Main Reinforcement Project Contractor: C. Naughton Corp. (Monday-Friday 7:00 am to 4:00pm)

**Other:**

- MassDOT will be staging installation and beam end cleaning

and concrete encasements at I-195 East and West bound lanes over Purchase St, County St and State St will is scheduled during the overnight hours starting November 12th and will continue until May 31st of 2024. Work will take place Sundays to Thursdays. Police will be on site for detour and safety setups.

- Contractor (SCR Constructors) will continue site work at the future South Coast Rail station platform locations in the city. (Church St at Carlisle St and Wamsutta St at Acushnet Ave.) If you have questions, please email the project team at [SouthCoastRail@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:SouthCoastRail@dot.state.ma.us)

- Contractor (SCR Constructors) will continue site work at the future pedestrian bridge across Route 18 impacting parking along Purchase Street between Willis Street and Pearl Street and at the Division of Career Services on Acushnet Avenue. Temporary detours may be in place pending construction activities occurring. If you have questions, please email the project team at [SouthCoastRail@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:SouthCoastRail@dot.state.ma.us)

### **Project: Lead Service Line Replacement Program Phase II**

**General Contractor: C. Naughton Corp. (Monday-Friday 7:00am -5:00pm)**

- The contractor will be working Lead Service Line Replacements. On Monday, the contractor will be on Plymouth Street, between Palmer Street and Reed Street. From Tuesday through Friday, the contractor will be on Ryan Street, between Brigham Street and Brownell Street. The contractor is scheduled to work Monday to Friday from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm. During working hours, sections of Plymouth Street then Ryan Street may be closed, and signs posted to detour traffic around work areas. Police details will be on-site allowing access to residents only and assist with traffic management.

### **Project: Phase 4 Transmission Main Reinforcement Project**

**Contractor: C. Naughton Corp. (Monday-Friday 7:00 am to 4:00pm)**

- The Contractor will continue replacing of the existing 48-in

water transmission main at the railroad crossing north of Chipaway Road in East Freetown.

**Project: Shawmut Avenue and Howland Street Pumping Station Improvements Project General Contractor: WES Construction Corp. (Monday-Friday 7:00am to 4:00pm)**

- The Contractor will be excavating test pits and installing fencing at the Howland St site. They may also begin staging pipe, completing layout work and clearing brush behind the sidewalk area to prepare for the proposed replacement of the sewer force main along Nash Rd between Shawmut Ave and Mt. Pleasant St. Lane restrictions may be in-place during working hours.”