

Former New Bedford Police Officer Sentenced for Child Pornography Offenses

A former New Bedford police officer was sentenced today in federal court in Boston for possessing and distributing child pornography.

Paul Hodson, 44, of Acushnet, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Patti B. Saris to six years in prison and five years of supervised release. In December 2019, Hodson pleaded guilty to one count of distribution of child pornography and one count of possession of child pornography.

Following an investigation into the use of peer-to-peer file sharing networks for the trade of child pornography, a search was executed at Hodson's home. Hodson was interviewed on scene and admitted to using peer-to-peer file sharing software to trade child pornography. Hundreds of child pornography files were recovered from Hodson's computer including at least one file that was distributed to undercover law enforcement in the course of the investigation.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling and William S. Walker, Acting Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in Boston made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by the Massachusetts State Police and the Acushnet Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney Anne Paruti, Lelling's Project Safe Childhood Coordinator and Deputy Chief of the Major Crimes Unit, prosecuted the case.

The case is brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In 2006, the Department of Justice created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from exploitation and abuse. 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 www.projectsafechildhood.gov.