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Washington Man Sentenced to 23 Years in Prison for Producing Child Sexual Abuse Material

Spokane, Washington – United States Attorney Pete Serrano announced today that Michael Avila Espinoza, age 34, was sentenced for two counts of Production of Child Pornography. Espinoza pleaded guilty on June 11, 2025. United States District Judge Thomas O. Rice sentenced Espinoza to 23 years in prison, followed by a life term of supervised release. Judge Rice also imposed a \$15,000 assessment under the Amy, Vicky, and Andy Child Pornography Victim Assistance Act.

According to court documents, Espinoza met with and engaged in sex with two minor females, one as young as 12 years of age, and recorded the child rapes on his cell phone. Espinoza was identified during the course of a state sexual assault investigation involving one of Espinoza's victims. Investigators obtained a search warrant for Espinoza's social media and found communications between Espinoza and his minor victims that made it clear Espinoza met with the minors several times for sex. Investigators also observed in Espinoza's social media records the sexually explicit videos Espinoza created and additional sexually explicit photos of the victims solicited by Espinoza. When the victims were interviewed, they confirmed that Espinoza offered and paid them small amounts of money in exchange for sex.

"It is difficult to imagine more violative conduct than the sexual assault of multiple minors, but here Defendant multiplied the horrors of his crimes by commodifying his child victims, and by recording his acts of violence against them," said United States Attorney Serrano. "In a civilized society, it is everyone's job to protect the innocent and the vulnerable. The United States Attorney's Office stands with child victims and prioritizes their protection from sexual predators like Defendant. A 23-year sentence is significant, and demonstrates the collaborative partnerships of local, state, and federal law enforcement colleagues who work tirelessly to protect our communities."

"Espinoza's sentencing—23 years in federal prison followed by a lifetime of supervised release—reflects the profound harm caused by the defendant's crimes, including his abuse of

minors in the production of child sexual exploitation material,” said HSI Seattle acting Special Agent in Charge April Miller. Thanks to the coordinated efforts of HSI special agents from HSI Yakima and HSI Wenatchee, who supported our local law enforcement partners, this threat to children has been removed from our communities and will be closely monitored for the rest of his life. HSI remains unwavering in our commitment to stop the vile crime of child exploitation.”

“This negotiated sentence accomplishes several of the goals the State hopes for—it encompasses crimes from multiple jurisdictions, with multiple victims, holds the defendant accountable at a high level, and protects the victims from having to speak about and relive the trauma of what the defendant did to them multiple times.” Said Deputy Prosecutor Micaela Meadow. “Chelan County is grateful to our federal counterparts for assisting in and taking on these difficult cases where we may not be able to accomplish those goals at the State level.”

“Protecting the safety of our community, especially our most vulnerable, is our highest priority. We are grateful for the partnership that helped bring this offender to justice,” stated Douglas County Sheriff’s Office Undersheriff Tyler I. Caille.

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 U.S. Attorneys’ Offices and 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 <https://www.justice.gov/psc>.

This case was investigated jointly by Homeland Security Investigations, the Chelan County Sheriff’s Office, and the Douglas County Sheriff’s Office. This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Ann T. Wick.

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