

Jacksonville Man Indicted On Child Porn Charges

By Donna Martinez

Tuesday, 30 July 2019 09:01 - Last Updated Wednesday, 31 July 2019 10:15

A Federal grand jury in Raleigh has returned a twelve-count indictment charging Morgan Jeffrey Shepard, age 32, of Jacksonville, North Carolina, with one count of producing child pornography, three counts of enticing a minor to engage in a sexual activity, seven counts of receipt of child pornography, and one count of possession of child pornography. The indictment alleges that beginning in or around September 2016, and continuing through in or around November 2016, Shepard persuaded and enticed a minor victim to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of creating child pornography. During the same dates, he is alleged to have enticed the same minor victim to engage in sexual activity that constituted sexual exploitation of a child under North Carolina state law.

The indictment alleges that between April 23 and April 27, 2018, Shepard enticed two additional minor victims to engage in criminal sexual activity. It further alleges that beginning at a time unknown and ending on July 13, 2017, SHEPARD received at least seven images containing visual depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct.

Lastly, the indictment alleges that on July 13, 2017, Shepard was found to be in possession of digital media containing images and videos involving minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct.

If convicted of these charges, She would face a statutory minimum sentence of 15 years' imprisonment and a maximum sentence of up to life imprisonment. He also would face up to a lifetime of supervised release following any term of imprisonment.

This case is part of the Project Safe Childhood initiative, a national program aimed at ensuring that criminals exploiting children are effectively prosecuted by making full use of all available law enforcement resources at every level. For more information about this important national initiative, go to www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

The case is being investigated by the Department of Homeland Security, the Onslow County Sheriff's Office, the Craven County Sheriff's Office, and the Wilmington Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney Jake D. Pugh is prosecuting the case for the government.

#