

Massachusetts man arrested for allegedly sex trafficking a 15-year old girl

"A Canton was arrested yesterday in connection with sex trafficking a minor.

Keion Rowell, 23, was indicted on one count of sex trafficking of a child and one count of conspiracy to commit sex trafficking of a minor. Following an initial appearance in federal court in Boston today before U.S. District Court Magistrate Judge Marianne B. Bowler, Rowell was detained pending an arraignment and detention hearing scheduled for April 19, 2022.

"We believe that this defendant preyed on, groomed, and advertised a vulnerable 15-year-old girl, a child, for commercial sex – profiting off his exploitation," said United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins. "This case is an unfortunate reminder that sex trafficking knows no limits. It can reach any community and target victims of all ages. My office and our law enforcement partners remain diligent in our efforts to prevent the targeted exploitation and harming of our most vulnerable."

"The facts alleged in this case are gut-wrenching. No person, let alone a child, should ever be treated as a commodity, and sold for sex, but Keion Rowell is accused of doing exactly that," said Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division. "Child sex traffickers often prey upon our community's most vulnerable minors – runaways, foster kids, children who face difficult circumstances – promising their young victims that they will receive care and support when that couldn't be further from the truth. Their sole focus is on exploiting them

for their own personal gain which is why FBI Boston's Child Exploitation – Human Trafficking Task Force will continue to do everything it can to ensure children recovered from this kind of exploitation receive the services they need to move forward with their lives, and their traffickers are brought to justice.”

According to the indictment, on Jan. 28, 2021, agents recovered a 15-year-old girl who had been reported missing approximately 10 to 14 days previously after she left her home in a suburb of Boston. It is alleged that the victim's phone contained nude and revealing photos of the victim, online advertisements for commercial sex that included pictures of the victim, as well as Venmo and Cash App accounts registered to Rowell. Rowell allegedly opened an online “Meet Me” account for the victim that advertised commercial sex with the victim and instructed the victim on how much she should charge. It is further alleged that the Rowell required the victim to engage in commercial sex acts multiple times and took the proceeds.

Members of the public who believe they may be a victim of this alleged crime should contact USAMA.VictimAssistance@usdoj.gov.

The charge of sex trafficking of a child provides for a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years and up to life in prison, five years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. The charge of conspiracy to commit sex trafficking of a child provides for a sentence of up to life in prison, five years of supervised release and a fine of \$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.

U.S. Attorney Rollins and FBI SAC Bonavolonta made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by the Boston and Randolph Police Departments and the Massachusetts State Police. Assistant U.S. Attorney Evan Gotlob of Rollins' Civil Rights Enforcement Team is prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the indictment 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.