

East St. Louis Man Sentenced to 30 Years Imprisonment for Production of Child Pornography and Gun Offense

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EAST ST. LOUIS – The U.S. Federal Court announced today that Dinish L. Watson, 26, of East St. Louis, Illinois, was sentenced to 30 years in federal prison on Wednesday, April 27, 2022, for Production of Child Pornography and Felon in Possession of a Firearm.

Following his release from prison, Watson will serve a five-year term of supervised release. Watson was also ordered to register as a sex offender. According to court documents, on January 11, 2021, the United States Marshal's Service (USMS) executed an arrest warrant at Watson's residence for one of Watson's friends.

Discovered during the arrest was a Del-Ton 5.56 caliber rifle with a loaded extended magazine, a Sig Sauer 9mm pistol, a bullet-proof vest, and additional ammunition. Watson admitted to law enforcement officials that he had previously held the rifle and posed for pictures with it.

Watson later messaged two different friends on a social media application indicating that law enforcement had taken his guns. The evidence adduced at the sentencing hearing showed that Watson had acquired at least one firearm after his contact with USMS and that Watson claimed affiliation with a local gang in East St. Louis.

Separately, in late January of 2021, the East St. Louis Police Department and the Public Safety Enforcement Group (PSEG) received information that Watson had engaged in a sexual relationship with a 16-year-old female. The investigation revealed that he repeatedly engaged in sexual conduct with the 16-year-old and filmed her performing a sex act on him.

While law enforcement investigated the case, Watson threatened the 16-year-old and posted the video of the sex act to a social media website. Watson has prior felony convictions for Aggravated Battery and Stealing from a Person. He was on probation at the time of the offenses.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), the centerpiece of the Department of Justice's violent crime reduction efforts. PSN is an evidence-based program proven to be effective at reducing violent crime.

Through PSN, a broad spectrum of stakeholders work together to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in the community and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. As part of this strategy, PSN focuses enforcement efforts on the most violent offenders and partners with locally based prevention and reentry programs for lasting reductions in crime.

This case was investigated by Public Safety Enforcement Group (PSEG), the East St. Louis Police Department, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). PSEG is an Illinois State Police unit embedded in and working in direct partnership with the East St. Louis Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney Laura Reppert prosecuted the case