

East St. Louis Man Sentenced to 5 Years in Prison for Threatening to Endanger a Child

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EAST ST. LOUIS – A U.S. District judge sentenced an East St. Louis man to five years in federal prison after he admitted to threatening the mother of a 10-year-old child, who he forcibly took from home in Illinois and drove to St. Louis.

U.S. Attorney Rachel Crowe said Marcus L. Weekfall, also known as “Conehead”, 39, pleaded guilty to one count of interstate extortion with a threat to injure.

Crowe said: “The defendant targeted a child to mentally and emotionally abuse both the victim and the victim’s mother. His actions were calculated and dangerous, thus warranted this prison sentence.”

According to court documents, the minor victim was asleep in bed when Weekfall broke into the victim’s mother’s house around 4:20 a.m. on May 28, 2022. Weekfall demanded the child to leave with him, and he took him to St. Louis. Weekfall and the victim’s mother were previously in a romantic relationship.

“Illinois State Police Officers assigned to the Public Safety Enforcement Group work tirelessly to protect the residents in the Metro East and we will continue to coordinate with the U.S. Attorney’s Office to make sure people like Weekfall are held accountable for their crimes,” said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly.

The mother contacted police after seeing Weekfall on a surveillance camera inside the residence.

Officers with the East St. Louis Police Department contacted Weekfall by phone and requested the child be returned safely, but Weekfall refused. While in possession of the victim, Weekfall called the mother several times and threatened to harm the child if the mother declined to meet with him. After five hours, Weekfall had another individual return the child to the mother.

“Protecting those who cannot protect themselves is of paramount importance to the FBI and all of law enforcement,” said FBI Springfield Field Office Special Agent in Charge David Nanz. “Due to swift action and coordination with our law enforcement partners, the child was returned safely and Weekfall will spend five years behind bars—giving him ample time to consider the gravity of his actions.”

In addition to the prison sentence, Weekfall will serve three years of supervised release. FBI Springfield Field Office, the Public Safety Enforcement Group (PSEG) of the Illinois State Police and the East St. Louis Police Department contributed to the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Ali Burns prosecuted the case.