

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Southern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, January 17, 2020

New York DEA Diversion Investigator Charged With Attempting To Produce Child Pornography And Enticing A Minor To Have Sex

Geoffrey S. Berman, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, Dermot Shea, the Commissioner of the New York City Police Department (“NYPD”), Keith A. Bonanno, Special Agent in Charge of the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General (“DOJ OIG”) Cyber Investigations Office, and Guido Modano, Special Agent in Charge of the DOJ OIG New York Field Office, announced today the arrest and filing of charges against FREDERICK L. SCHEININ. The Complaint charges that between October 2019 and January 2020, SCHEININ attempted to produce child pornography and entice a minor to have sex. SCHEININ was arrested yesterday and will be presented later today before U.S. Magistrate Judge Katharine H. Parker in Manhattan federal court.

U.S. Attorney Geoffrey S. Berman said: “As a diversion investigator at the DEA, Frederick Scheinin’s foremost responsibility was to protect the public from illegally diverted drugs. Instead of fulfilling this worthy mission, Scheinin allegedly spent months attempting to prey on a 14-year-old boy. This arrest exemplifies that no one is above the law. Our law enforcement partners will continue to bring all necessary tools to bear to apprehend individuals who wish to do harm to young children, no matter who they are.”

NYPD Commissioner Dermot Shea said: “I want to commend the U.S. Attorney and our federal partners who, together with our NYPD investigators, work every day to protect the innocent against such alleged reprehensible predators. I am proud of the undercover work in this case, which has now led to criminal charges against a law enforcement officer who allegedly betrayed his sacred oath.”

DOJ OIG Cyber Investigations Office Special Agent in Charge Keith A. Bonanno said: “The OIG and our law enforcement partners will thoroughly investigate allegations of abuse or exploitation of children by DOJ employees. Those who are found guilty of this type of criminal behavior will be brought to justice.”

Up until the time of his arrest, SCHEININ was a diversion investigator in the New York Field Office of the Drug Enforcement Administration (“DEA”). According to the allegations in the Complaint filed in Manhattan federal court today:

Between October 2019 and January 2020, SCHEININ used a multimedia messaging application on his cellphone to communicate with an undercover law enforcement officer (“UC-1”) who was posing as a 14-year-old boy. SCHEININ repeatedly sent sexually explicit images and videos to UC-1 in an attempt to persuade UC-1 to transmit sexually explicit images, photos, and live visual depictions of UC-1 to SCHEININ. In particular, SCHEININ repeatedly asked UC-1 to transmit images and videos of UC-1’s penis. The Complaint further alleges that SCHEININ attempted to arrange a meeting with UC-1 at which SCHEININ planned to have sex with UC-1. Law enforcement arrested SCHEININ yesterday in New York, New York, at a location where SCHEININ said he would meet UC-1. SCHEININ was in possession of condoms and lubricant at the time of his arrest.

SCHEININ, 29, of Sunnyside, New York, is charged with one count of attempted production of child pornography, which carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years in prison and a maximum

sentence of 30 years in prison, and one count of attempted enticement of a minor, which carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison and maximum sentence of life in prison. The maximum potential sentences in this case are prescribed by Congress and are provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the judge.

The charges in the Complaint are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

* * *

Mr. Berman praised the outstanding investigative work of the NYPD and the DOJ OIG New York Field Office and Cyber Investigations Office.

The prosecution of this case is being handled by the Office's Complex Frauds and Cybercrime Unit. Assistant United States Attorney Nicholas Chiuchiolo is in charge of the prosecution.