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**PASCO MAN SENTENCED TO 20 YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR SOLICITING
SEXUAL ACTS AND EXPLICIT CONTENT FROM MINORS ONLINE**

Spokane, Washington – First Assistant United States Attorney Pete Serrano announced that on March 11, 2026, Chief United States District Court Judge Stanley A. Bastian, sentenced Manuel A. Rodriguez, age 29, of Pasco, Washington, to 20 years of imprisonment for Online Enticement of a Minor and Attempted Production of Child Pornography. Judge Bastian also ordered that following his sentence, Rodriguez will serve a lifetime term of supervised release, register as a sex offender, and abide by a number of conditions, to include those pertaining to Rodriguez's access and use of electronic devices.

According to court documents, in February of 2023, a student at a local high school disclosed that she had been sexually assaulted by a 26-year-old male when she was 15 years old. The sexual assault resulted in a pregnancy. A subsequent investigation by the Pasco Police Department (PPD) identified the male as Manuel A. Rodriguez, who resided in Pasco, Washington. Further investigation by PPD revealed that Rodriguez sought out the 15-year-old girl on the Snapchat application in October of 2022. Rodriguez messaged with the 15-year-old in a sexually explicit manner for an extended period of time. In December of 2022, Rodriguez picked the 15-year-old girl up in his vehicle on two occasions. Each time, Rodriguez transported the minor girl to a location in Pasco, Washington, and sexually assaulted her.

PPD and the Southeast Regional Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (SER-ICAC) obtained records from Rodriguez's Snapchat account. Therein, detectives discovered that Rodriguez had communicated with numerous Snapchat users who identified themselves as minor girls, including girls as young as 13. The communications were sexually explicit. One such minor was identified as a 14-year-old girl living in another state. Rodriguez received and requested image and video files depicting the 14-year-old girl.

“Rodriguez reprehensibly used online applications to target, meet, and sexually abuse children in the Eastern District of Washington. I applaud the courage of the 15-year-old victim, whose report enabled law enforcement to protect other children from Mr. Rodriguez's conduct,” stated First Assistant Serrano. “Through the courage of the victim and the tireless efforts of our ICAC Team, this offender will no longer be in the community to harm children. Although no sentence can overcome the ongoing harm suffered by the minor victims in this case, the collaborative work of the state and federal law enforcement officers and my office in this case makes clear that we will use every available tool and resource to protect our children.”

“Offenders who use social media platforms to exploit children often believe they can hide behind a screen,” said Hyrum Stohel, Sergeant with the Southeast Regional Internet Crimes Against Children (SER-ICAC) Task Force. “But through careful investigation and digital forensics, law enforcement is often able to identify those responsible and stop further victimization. Investigations like this demonstrate the importance of partnerships between local law enforcement and federal agencies to identify offenders, protect victims, and prevent further harm to children in our communities.”

“The extraordinary bravery of a victim, who worked with local law enforcement and Homeland Security Investigations special agents to provide crucial digital evidence, was instrumental in putting this child predator behind bars,” said Homeland Security Investigations Seattle acting Special Agent in Charge April Miller. “Her courage not only brought Rodriguez to justice, but also protected other children from potential harm. Predators who use online platforms to groom and arrange meetings with vulnerable children will find no refuge from law enforcement.”

This case was investigated by the Pasco Police Department and the Southeast Regional Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, which is comprised of special agents with Homeland Security Investigations and local detectives from the Richland, Kennewick, and Pasco Police Departments, and the Benton County Sheriff’s Office. This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Laurel J. Holland.

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