



Rick Staly, Sheriff
FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

NEWS RELEASE

Date: August 1, 2025

Prepared by: Joseph Bober, Public Information Office

Email: PIO@flaglersheriff.com

Release #: 2025 – 140

FCSO Cyber Crimes Detectives Arrest Palm Coast Man **Following Child Exploitation Investigation**

BUNNELL, Fla. — The Flagler County Sheriff's Office, with assistance from state partners through the Northeast Florida Inter-Agency Child Exploitation and Persons Trafficking Task Force, has arrested a Palm Coast man after detectives found child sexual abuse material on his cell phone.

On June 10, the FCSO Problem Area Crime Enforcement Unit arrested Eric Hoover Jr., 30, for possession of cocaine with intent to sell, possession of drug paraphernalia, unlawful use of a two-way communications device, and violation of probation following a narcotics-related investigation by the FCSO Special Investigations Unit. While searching for evidence related to narcotics distribution following Hoover's arrest, SIU detectives located suspected child sexual abuse material on his cellphone and referred the case to the FCSO Cyber Crimes Unit.

During the investigation, Cyber Crimes detectives obtained a search warrant for the device and the FCSO Digital Forensic Unit conducted a forensic autopsy of the device. This analysis discovered 23 files identified as child sexual abuse material. Included in the material were multiple sexually explicit photos and videos of victims determined to be under 5 years of age.

On July 31, detectives arrested Hoover at the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility, where he was being held without bond since his June arrest, for 10 counts of possession of child sexual abuse material. Under Florida law, the charges were enhanced because the material was depicting a child younger than the age of 5.

Proudly Serving the Community Since 1917
A Five Diamond Accredited Law Enforcement Agency





Eric Hoover Jr. (Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility mugshot)

“We arrested this dirtbag back in June as a drug-dealing target of Operation: Summer Slammer, but our detectives found out that he was committing crimes that are even more heinous,” said Sheriff Rick Staly. “I commend everyone involved for their hard work making sure this poison peddler pervert faces the consequences of his sick fantasies, and he shouldn’t see the outside of a prison cell for a long, long time.”

The FCSO Cyber Crimes Unit is working with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children to identify and locate Hoover’s victims. The case remains under investigation and additional charges may be pending.

About NEFL INTERCEPT

In April, the FCSO joined NEFL INTERCEPT, a regional task force focused on combating child exploitation and human trafficking. This multi-agency initiative includes investigators and analysts from across Northeast Florida, representing agencies such as the Clay County Sheriff’s Office, Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office, Nassau County Sheriff’s Office, Putnam County Sheriff’s Office, St. Johns County Sheriff’s Office, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and Homeland Security Investigations.

NEFL INTERCEPT operates in partnership with Operation Lightshine, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting law enforcement through enhanced investigative resources, victim rescue efforts, and offender accountability. This collaboration leverages advanced technology, forensic tools, subject matter expertise, and cross agency cooperation to achieve its mission of protecting vulnerable populations and dismantling criminal networks.

###

*Proudly Serving the Community Since 1917
A Five Diamond Accredited Law Enforcement Agency*

