



Date: 06/23/2017**NEWS RELEASE****NR# 17-47**

Suspect arrested for Traveling to Meet a Minor for Sex and Soliciting a Parent to Have Sex with a Minor

Seminole Co. – (June 23, 2017) – On June 22, Seminole County Sheriff's investigators arrested Thomas Petko and charged him with Traveling to Meet a Minor for Sex and Soliciting a Parent to Have Sex with a Minor. The investigation began on May 24 when Petko communicated online with an undercover investigator portraying himself as the father of a 12-year-old female. Over the course of approximately four weeks, Petko stated multiple times that he wanted to meet to have sex with the minor.

On June 22, Petko communicated with the undercover investigator again and arranged to travel to a predetermined location within Seminole County to have sexual activity with the minor in exchange for an iPhone. He was instead met by investigators and placed under arrest. Petko was booked into the John E. Polk Correctional Facility on \$70,000 bond.

Law enforcement officials recommend the following safety tips for parents:

- Communicate with your child. Talk with them about the potential dangers online and the reasons why they should be careful.
- Spend time with your child online and learn their favorite online destinations.
- Keep the computer in an area of the house where online activity can be monitored, not in your child's bedroom.
- Use parental controls and/or blocking software.
- Instruct children not to give out personal information such as their home address, school name or telephone number, and never to arrange a meeting with someone they met online without your permission.

Additional safety information can be found in the FBI's "Parent's Guide to Internet Safety" at: <http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/parent-guide>.

Arrestee:

Thomas Anthony Petko (DOB 07/07/54), 425 Wood Park Way #207, Longwood

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