

U.S. vs. Terrell Layne Smith

Overview of the Terrell Layne Smith Case

In August of 2012, Terrell Smith became acquainted with a woman who had a 17-year old daughter. Shortly thereafter, Smith moved in with this female acquaintance, joining the residence of the 17-year old female (minor #2) and four of her siblings. In September of the same year, a female high school classmate (minor #1) of the same age moved into the same residence. Smith told the two teenage minors that they could earn money by going out on “dates”, referring to prostitution. He did so knowing that the two females were under the age of eighteen.

The defendant used his cell phone to take pictures of minor #1. In the pictures, the teenaged girl posed in various sorts of attire, including lingerie. Minor #1 took similar pictures of minor #2. Smith then used the photos to solicit the teenagers for commercial sex acts on a website named Backpage.com, where he advertised the minors as being 20 or 21 years of age. From mid-September until mid-October, Smith transported the minors to various locations in Colorado, including private homes and hotels so that one or both minors could engage in prostitution. He also drove the two teenage girls in a car rented by minor #2’s mother to Phoenix, Arizona where minor #1 engaged in at least one act of prostitution. Smith kept a portion of the proceeds of the commercial sex acts by the minors. To exercise control and to foster the minors’ dependency on him, Smith bought the minors clothing, food, and provided them with marijuana.

Smith’s scheme came to an abrupt end on October 14th, when minor #1 was arrested in Phoenix on a runaway warrant. Smith was indicted by a federal grand jury on May 7, 2014 and pleaded guilty to Transportation with Intent to Engage in Commercial Sex Activity. He was sentenced to 151 months (over 12 years) in federal prison.

*This case study was adapted from the Department of Justice, District of Colorado January 11, 2016 press release, available at <https://www.justice.gov/usao-co/pr/denver-man-sentenced-over-12-years-federal-prison-sex-trafficking-minors-across-state>

Media Coverage and Press Release on U.S. vs. Terrell Layne Smith

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http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_29372340/denver-man-gets-12-years-prison-sex-trafficking