

Child sexual abuser pleads guilty in federal court

Written by Staff Reports
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ALBUQUERQUE – Patrick Begay, 43, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation who resides in Churchrock pled guilty March 17 in federal court in Albuquerque, to an abusive sexual contact charge.

The plea agreement recommends that Begay be sentenced within the range of 144 to 216 months in federal prison followed by a term of supervised release to be determined by the court. Begay will also be required to register as a sex offender.

Begay was arrested in November on a four-count indictment charging him with sexually abusing a child under the age of 12 from November 2013 through December 2015, and engaging in sexual contact with a child under the age of 12 on Jan. 6, 2016.

According to the indictment, Begay committed the offenses on the Navajo Indian Reservation in McKinley County.

During the proceedings, Begay pled guilty to Count 4 of the indictment charging him with abusive sexual contact with a child. In entering the guilty plea, Begay admitted that on Jan. 6, 2016, he engaged in sexual contact with the victim, who was then nine years old. Begay further admitted that he repeatedly sexually abused the victim from the time she was seven years old.

Begay remains in custody pending a sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

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This case was investigated by the Gallup office of the FBI and the Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety. Assistant U.S. Attorney Nicholas J. Marshall is prosecuting this case as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice (DOJ) to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse.

Led by United States Attorneys' Offices and DOJ's Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims.