

Former Baltimore Police Officer Indicted for Operating a Prostitution Business

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BALTIMORE—A federal grand jury returned an indictment charging former Baltimore Police officer Lamin Manneh, age 32, of Baltimore, with traveling across state lines and using the telephone and Internet to operate a prostitution business. The indictment was returned on August 15, 2013, and unsealed today at Manneh's initial appearance.

The indictment was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein; Special Agent in Charge Stephen E. Vogt of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; Colonel Marcus L. Brown, Superintendent of the Maryland State Police; and Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne C. Leites.

According to the indictment, between February 2013 and May 9, 2013, Manneh operated a prostitution business that serviced over 300 customers. The business provided prostitution services to customers who came to an agreed location ("in-call"), as well as at locations specified by the customers ("out-call"). Manneh's 19-year-old wife and another 19-year-old woman worked as prostitutes for Manneh. The indictment alleges that as part of his business, Manneh drafted, paid for, and posted more than 50 prostitution advertisements for the two women on Internet websites; rented an apartment and hotel rooms to facilitate in-call commercial sex acts with clients who responded to the prostitution advertisements; and drove the women to out-call commercial sex acts at residences and hotel rooms.

According to the indictment, Manneh provided the women with cell phones and taught them to use voice over Internet phone services to communicate with prospective clients and with one another. The indictment alleges that Manneh waited outside the commercial sex act locations and electronically messaged with the women when they were with clients; that Manneh carried his police-issued firearm and agreed to forcibly interrupt a commercial sex interaction if the client was aggressive or non-compliant; and that he supplied both women with synthetic marijuana. According to the indictment, Manneh collected all his wife's prostitution earnings and a percentage of the other woman's prostitution earnings.

Manneh faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison, followed by up to lifetime of supervised release, for operating a prostitution business. Manneh had his initial appearance this morning in U.S. District Court in Baltimore and is detained pending a detention hearing scheduled today at 3:45 p.m.

An indictment is not a finding of guilt. An individual charged by indictment is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at some later criminal proceedings.

The case was investigated by the FBI-led Maryland Child Exploitation Task Force (MCETF),

created in 2010 to combat child prostitution, with members from 10 state and federal law enforcement agencies. The task force coordinates with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the Maryland State Police Child Recovery Unit to identify missing children being advertised online for prostitution.

MCETF partners with the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force, formed in 2007 to discover and rescue victims of human trafficking while identifying and prosecuting offenders. Members include federal, state, and local law enforcement, as well as victim service providers and local community members. For more information about the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force, please visit http://www.justice.gov/usao/md/priorities_human.html.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein commended the FBI, Maryland State Police, and Anne Arundel County State's Attorney's Office for their work in the investigation and recognized the Baltimore Police Department for its assistance. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark W. Crooks, who is prosecuting the case.