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OAKLAND COUNTY

Bloomfield Twp. man accused of seeking sex from teen online charged



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A Bloomfield Township man who allegedly asked who he thought was a teen for sex in an online chat has been charged, police said.

Duane Juriga was arraigned Thursday in 48th District Court in Bloomfield Hills, according to authorities.

The 61-year-old is charged with using a computer to commit a crime and accosting a child for immoral purposes, the Bloomfield Township Police Department said.

A magistrate set Juriga's bond at \$50,000 and scheduled his next court hearing for May 11.

If convicted, he faces up to 10 years in prison for using a computer to commit a crime and up to four years for accosting a child for immoral purposes.

Reached Friday, Bloomfield Hills attorney John Freeman, who represents Juriga, said that the charges against his client are based only on alleged communications.

"Our system is based on the presumption of innocence, which means if a jury were asked to vote right now, every single one of the jurors would have to vote not guilty," Freeman said. "My understanding from conversations with law enforcement is that there is no allegation whatsoever that Mr. Juriga ever met with anyone or ever acted out in any way."

Freeman said he looks forward to reviewing the evidence after the prosecutor's office turns it over. "And (my client and I) look forward to defending (him) against the charges vigorously in court," he said.

Bloomfield Township police said the Kent County Sheriff's Office contacted them on Aug. 11 about an investigation that potentially involved a township resident.

A detective with the sheriff's office reported she had been conducting an online sting operation and posing as a 14-year-old girl, officials said. During the operation, she was contacted online by a person who told her he was a 51-year-old married Michigan man, according to authorities.

In the conversation, the man told her his name was Tom Jones and asked for her age, investigators said. She told him she was 14 and asked if that was an issue, officials said.

Police said the man told her it wasn't, and they exchanged pictures of themselves.

Detectives said the conversation then became sexual, with "Tom Jones" telling the teen she looked sexy and she should feel that way. He also asked her about her sexual experience, investigators said.

The undercover officer asked the suspect if it mattered that she was 14 and didn't have much experience, according to police.

Authorities said the chat became even more graphic, with the suspect making comments about sex acts and what he wanted to do to the girl.

Kent County investigators were able to identify the suspect as Juriga. The sheriff's office turned the investigation over to the Bloomfield Township Police Department.

Police allege Juriga continued to send online messages to undercover officers until Oct. 16.

Last week, the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office issued a felony warrant, officials said.

Juriga was arraigned the same week a [Macomb Township](#) man was ordered to stand trial for allegedly trying to meet a teen boy for sex in New Baltimore last year.

Last week, a [former Michigan man](#) convicted of first-degree criminal sexual conduct and accosting a child for immoral purposes in connection with the 2008 sexual assault of a child was sentenced to 35-45 years in prison.

In March, a [Gaylord city councilman](#) was charged with accosting a minor for immoral purposes and using a computer to commit a crime for allegedly going to a hotel to meet a minor after a sexually charged online chat.

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