



Thomas Corning
Chief of Police

PRESS RELEASE: UPD CASE # 25-2387

Date: 11/03/25

Location: Mendocino and Sonoma Counties.

Victim: 17-year-old female.

Suspects: Matthew P. Lafever, 37-year-old resident of Mendocino County.

Violations: 647.6(a)(1) PC – Knowingly Annoy and or Molest a Minor.

On 10/16/25 the Ukiah Police Department was notified by a concerned parent of a Ukiah High School student that a teacher, Matthew Lafever, a journalism teacher at the high school, had made an inappropriate sexual comment towards her daughter. Through the course of the initial investigation into that incident, Ukiah Police Department Detectives learned that a different UHS student had information regarding Lafever contacting minors on social media.

UPD Detectives conducted an interview with the female high school student, who told the Detectives that she had conversed with Lafever on social media, informed him that she was a minor, and Lafever had persisted to make sexually suggestive comments about her and repeatedly asked her to send him inappropriate photographs. Lafever also sent the minor scantily clad and inappropriate photographs of himself. UPD Detectives obtained a search warrant for Lafever's cell phone, computers, and residence. The following day UPD Detectives located Lafever at the Ukiah High School campus and seized his cell phone and multiple laptops. Lafever declined to provide the Detectives with a statement.

Lafever's electronic devices were forensically downloaded, and Detectives were able to confirm that the social media interaction described by the seventeen-year-old had occurred, and she had clearly informed Lafever that she was a minor. Through the course of their investigation the Detectives also located additional evidence that Lafever was reaching out to numerous minors throughout Sonoma and Mendocino Counties, however those victims have not been identified at this time due to the anonymity of social media.

On 11/03/25 UPD Detectives obtained an arrest warrant for Lafever for the crime of knowingly annoying and or molesting a minor. At approximately 7:00 a.m. UPD Detectives went to Lafever's residence, and he was taken into custody. Lafever was booked into the Mendocino County jail for 647.6(a) PC and would be required to post a \$10,000 bond.



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Lafever used numerous variations of the screen name “Johhnyender” across multiple social media platforms, and the Ukiah Police Department is asking that any minors that had contact or received any messages from similar social media accounts to please contact us.

The Ukiah Police Department remains committed to keeping the residents of Ukiah safe and we appreciate the assistance we received from the Ukiah High School and the Mendocino County District Attorney’s Office. For updates about crime in your neighborhood, residents can sign up for telephone, cell phone, and email notifications by clicking the Nixle link on our website: www.ukiahpolice.com.



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