



Crimes in International Waters and more... see what happened this past week in the Eastern District of Louisiana

CASE SPOTLIGHT

United States v. White 25-cr-226

What's the Basis?: According to the factual basis, **White**, three relatives (two of which were minors), and **White's** significant other boarded a commercial cruise, which departed New Orleans in November 2023 for a cruise to Mexico. While the ship was in international waters, **White** approached a 15-year-old passenger and brought her to a cabin under the pretense that one of the minor relatives wanted to see her.

White initially instructed the victim and his minor relative to engage in sexual activity. Both declined. **White** then offered the victim money, which she also refused. He subsequently sexually assaulted her and compelled her to engage in sexual acts involving himself and his minor relative. The parties stipulated that the assault occurred within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States.

What's the Violation?: **White** pled guilty to **Sexual Abuse**, in violation of **18 U.S.C. §§ 2242(3)**.

What's the Punishment?: The Honorable Darrel J. Papillion sentenced **White** to **192 months of imprisonment and 16 years of supervised release**.

This Week's Other Matters

U.S. V. PRICE, 25-CR-082

Charge: Possession with the Intent to Distribute Methamphetamine, Marijuana, and Buprenorphine; Possession of a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug Trafficking Crime; Possession of a Machinegun with a Machine Gun Conversion Device.

(18 U.S.C. §§ 922(o), 924(a)(2), and 924(c); 21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1), (b)(1)(C), (b)(1)(D), and (b)(1)(E))

Sentence: 180 months of imprisonment and 5 years of supervised release.

Judge: Honorable Carl J. Barbier

WHAT'S THAT STATUTE?

CLICK ON THE LINKS BELOW FOR MORE
DETAILS ON THE VIOLATIONS INCLUDED IN
THIS WEEKS' EDITION

- [18 U.S.C. § 922](#)
- [18 U.S.C. § 924](#)
- [18 U.S.C. § 2242](#)
- [21 U.S.C. § 841](#)



U.S. V. HARRIS, 15-CR-200

Violation of Mandatory, Standard, and Special Conditions of Supervised Release: Traffic violations resulting in arrest; failing to communicate with Probation; failing to make himself available for a scheduled home visit; failing to notify Probation of his arrest; and multiple failed drug tests.

Sentence: 6 months of imprisonment and 5 years of supervised release, including 6 months of home incarceration with GPS monitoring following release from imprisonment.

Judge: Honorable Carl J. Barbier

U.S. V. SCHWARTZ 22-CR-140

Violation of Mandatory Conditions of Supervised Release: Using synthetic marijuana, which he admitted before submitting a urine specimen to Probation.

Sentence: 18 months of imprisonment and 18 months of supervised release.

Judge: Honorable Darrel J. Papillion

U.S. V. BROWN, 24-CR-156

Charge: Possess with Intent to Distribute Fentanyl and Cocaine
(21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(C))

Sentence: 3 years of probation.

Judge: Honorable Carl J. Barbier

Did You Know?

This week's Case Spotlight involved sexual abuse aboard a cruise ship traveling in international waters. **Conduct outside the country's geographic boundaries can still fall within federal criminal jurisdiction, including the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States.**

For cruise ship offenses, jurisdiction can depend on several overlapping factors: the ship's location, ownership, country of registration, scheduled ports, and the nationality of the victim or accused. A foreign flag does not, by itself, prevent a federal investigation or prosecution. The FBI evaluates these connections when determining its authority to investigate crimes at sea.

One important provision, 18 U.S.C. § 7(8), extends federal jurisdiction, to the extent permitted by international law, to offenses committed by or against a U.S. national aboard a foreign vessel during a voyage with a scheduled departure from or arrival in the United States. The vessel's itinerary and the nationality of those involved can therefore become important jurisdictional evidence.

These investigations also present practical challenges. The crime scene is mobile, and passengers and witnesses may disperse when the voyage ends. The FBI coordinates with ship security, federal prosecutors, and international partners to determine jurisdiction, preserve evidence, and conduct interviews. The Cruise Vessel Security and Safety Act also imposes reporting requirements for specified serious incidents aboard covered vessels, including sexual assaults. A shipboard report can therefore become the starting point for a federal criminal case after the vessel returns to port.