



Report Crimes: [Email](#) or Call 1-866-DHS-2-ICE

ICE Newsroom

[News Releases](#)

[News Releases](#)

Document and Benefit Fraud
05/21/2018

ICE agent impersonator who possessed destructive devices sentenced to 24-month imprisonment



LOS ANGELES – An individual who impersonated a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent and who possessed multiple destructive devices was sentenced Monday to 24 months in federal prison.

Matthew Ryan Johnston, 26 of Fontana, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Percy Anderson for possession of an unregistered destructive device. The case is the result of an investigation by ICE’s Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR). ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) the San

ATLA Doc. No 18052561. (Posted 5/25/18)

Bernardino County Sheriff's Department (SBSD), U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Bureau of Land Management.

Throughout 2017, Johnston used fake ICE badges and uniforms to falsely represent himself as an ICE agent to unsuspecting members of the public.

On one occasion, Johnston used unauthorized red and blue police lights to chase another car, causing a traffic collision. On another, Johnston's ex-girlfriend accidentally activated the red and blue police lights in Johnston's car. When she was pulled over by an SBSBD detective, Johnston pretended to be an ICE agent while on the phone with the SBSBD detective at the scene.

Johnston went further in his impersonation of an ICE agent when he took a report from an individual about a potential undocumented person, and he falsely identified himself as an ICE agent to various employees and patrons at the Déjà Vu Showgirls club in Industry, Calif.

"The prison term in this case is absolutely appropriate," said Joseph Macias, Special Agent in Charge for HSI Los Angeles. "Regrettably, schemes like this involving the impersonation of federal agents and officers potentially undermine the public's confidence in their government and law enforcement. Displaying the commitment of the agencies and officers that investigated and ultimately captured this felon should be an important reminder that law enforcement officers are here to protect the public."

In October 2017, law enforcement agents executed a search warrant at Johnston's residence. Agents recovered a cache of weapons, illegal destructive devices, approximately 10,000 rounds of ammunition, a fake ICE identification card, body armor carriers with "ICE" and "Federal Agent" patches affixed to them, and red and blue police emergency lights.

"Individuals who impersonate our ICE special agents and officers violate the public trust and pose a risk to public safety," said ICE OPR Special Agent in Charge Jeffrey J. Gilgallon. "ICE OPR and HSI are committed to combating this fraud with our federal, state and local law enforcement partners."

Among the destructive devices recovered was a home-made, slam-fire device designed to shoot 12-gauge shotgun shells, as well as an AR-15 .223 caliber rifle equipped with an attached 37 mm flare launcher and improvised shotgun shell with anti-personnel ammunition. Using geo-coordinates from Johnston's cell phone, federal agents subsequently searched open desert land, and discovered five unexploded or partially exploded improvised explosive devices, an expended smoke grenade, an exploded container of a binary explosive, and the remnants of an exploded pipe bomb.

Share

-
-
-
-

Last Reviewed/Updated: 05/24/2018

