

Eastern District of Kentucky  
FILED

APR 08 2024

**Affidavit in Support of Criminal Complaint for Gabriel Howell**

Robert B. Carr  
CLERK U.S. DISTRICT COURT

Your Affiant, FBI Task Force Officer Dillon Blair, being duly sworn, deposes

and says:

**Introduction**

1. I am a City of London Police Department (“LPD”) Detective and Task Force Officer (“TFO”) assigned to the Federal Bureau of Investigations (“FBI”) Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Task Force and have been since December 2023. I am authorized to investigate violations of federal law and to apply for and execute warrants issued under the authority of the United States. I am sworn to investigate federal crimes. Prior to becoming a TFO, I worked as a general detective with LPD, investigating various state crimes that occurred in the City of London and Laurel County, Kentucky.

2. The facts in this affidavit come from my personal observations, my training and experience, and information obtained from other agents and witnesses with knowledge of the case. This affidavit is intended to show merely that there is sufficient probable cause for the requested warrant and does not set forth all knowledge about this matter. Unless specifically indicated otherwise, all conversations and statements described in this affidavit are related in substance and in part only.

**Results of Investigation**

3. In December 2023, FBI Special Agent Randy Copley, while on annual leave, was approached at his residence in Pikeville, KY, by Gabriel Howell. Howell wanted to report a crime to Agent Copley. SA Copley directed Howell to contact the FBI at 1-800-call-FBI to report the allegations of the crime. At that point Howell thanked SA Copley for his time and departed SA Copley's residence.

4. On March 30th, 2024, at SA Copley's aforementioned residence, SA Copley observed Howell drive by his residence at or around 1:18 pm. At or around 3:00-3:15 p.m., SA Copley noticed his mailbox was heavily damaged and a very large/ heavy metal pipe extending from the open mailbox and a note inside stating: "You've got mail, Guess who. It's not a game. It's people's life's." The note was written on a Drains Unlimited Inc, receipt. SA Copley immediately suspected Gabe Howell due to Howell's proximity on that date and the note. Due to SA Copley's suspicions, he spoke to Kevin Prater, Howell's employer. Prater identified the handwriting on the note left in SA Copley's mailbox as Howell's and identified the note as a receipt from a purchase his company had made.

5. On March 31st, 2024, SA Copley spoke to Howell at Howell's residence in Pikeville, KY, in an attempt to gauge and mitigate the extent of the threat to SA Copley and his family. During this interaction, Howell admitted to damaging SA Copley's mailbox and leaving the note and pipe in the mailbox.

6. On April 8th, 2024, around 2:27 am, SA Copley's driveway gate bell rang, and Howell was at SA Copley's driveway. SA Copley notified the Kentucky State Police due to the previous threatening encounter with Howell. SA Copley met Howell at the gate. Due to the extremely odd hour and Howell's previous threatening behavior and damaging of SA Copley's property, SA Copley, guided by his tactical training and experience, utilized his bureau issued firearm as a show of force to assist him in deescalating the hostile interaction. During the interaction, Howell stated to SA Copley that he should "just jump up and force" SA Copley to shoot him. The Kentucky State Police subsequently arrested Howell for an outstanding warrant at SA Copley's residence.

7. On the same date, your affiant interviewed Howell at the Pike County Detention Center and Howell was read and signed an FBI FD-395 (Advice of Rights). With full understanding of the Advice of Rights, Howell provided the following information:

8. Howell stated that he first went to SA Copley's residence because he had information on a murder and corruption, and he knew Copley to work for the FBI. Howell stated that SA Copley told him to report the allegations to 1-800-FBI and he felt that SA Copley "blew him off." Howell stated that Copley being FBI and a "higher cop" was valuable to him with the information that Howell knew. Howell stated that he was angry because no one was helping him with the allegations he was

reporting, and he damaged SA Copley's mailbox to send a message to SA Copley. Howell stated that the purpose of going to SA Copley's residence in the early morning hours of 4-8-2024, was because he was FBI Special Agent and SA Copley had not helped him. Howell agreed that his information was very important and he was afraid and he wanted SA Copley to feel afraid and he went back to his residence on 4-8-2024 to get what he wanted because it was valuable to him.

### **Conclusion**

9. Based on the above information, I believe there is probable cause supporting the conclusion that Gabe Howell threatened to assault a federal law enforcement officer with the intent to intimidate that officer into conducting an investigation through an official capacity for Howell's benefit in Pike County, in the Eastern District of Kentucky, and/or with the intent to retaliate against a federal law enforcement officer for a perceived failure to investigate, in clear violation of Title 18 of the United States Code, § 115(a)(1)(B).

Dillon Blair by EBA  
Dillon Blair *with permission*  
Task Force Officer  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
London, KY

Attested per Rule 4.1(b)(2)(A) this 8<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2024.



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Hon. Edward B. Atkins  
United States Magistrate Judge