

April 11, 2022

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL: MCLEAN COUNTY MAN CHARGED WITH POSSESSING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul announced that a Hudson, Illinois man was charged with possessing and disseminating child pornography. The case is part of Raoul's ongoing work, in collaboration with federal law enforcement agencies and local law enforcement officials throughout Illinois, to apprehend offenders who download and trade child pornography online.

David L. Howell, 62, was charged in McLean County Circuit Court with two counts of dissemination of child pornography, Class X felonies punishable by six to 30 years in prison; and six counts of possession of child pornography, Class 2 felonies punishable by up to three to seven years in prison. Howell's bond is set at \$500,000, and his next court date is scheduled for April 29.

"Child pornography is an abhorrent crime that exploits innocent children and their families each time an image is downloaded or shared," Raoul said. "I am committed to partnering with local law enforcement agencies, through the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, to identify and protect the public from these offenders."

Raoul's investigators, with the assistance of McLean County Sheriff's Office and the Hudson Police Department, conducted a search of a residence Thursday, April 7 in the 300 block of McLean Street in Hudson and arrested Howell after discovering evidence of child pornography.

The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

The arrest is part of Attorney General Raoul's work to investigate and prosecute child pornographers in Illinois. Raoul's office, with a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, runs the [Illinois Internet Crimes Against Children \(ICAC\) Task Force](#) that investigates child exploitation crimes and trains law enforcement agencies. The task force receives CyberTips, or online reports of child pornography, from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Over the last several years, CyberTipline reports have steadily increased; in fact, reports to the ICAC during 2021 increased by 42% over 2020.

In response to increasing reports of online child exploitation, Raoul announced a series of ICAC webinars aimed at giving parents, guardians and educators tools to help children and teens foster healthy online interactions. The free webinars take place on the first Thursday of each month and teach parents and guardians about the social media apps children and teens may be using, how to identify signs that a child may have been a victim of online child solicitation, and more. The next webinar, "Building Online Resilience," will take place on Thursday, May 5 at 6:30 p.m. Interested parties can visit OnlineSafeOnlineSmart.com or email karilyn.orr@ilag.gov to register.

Illinois' ICAC Task Force is one of 61 ICAC Task Forces throughout the country and is comprised of a network of more than 285 local, county, state and federal law enforcement agencies, and the task force covers 101 of Illinois' 102 counties. Since 2019, the Attorney General's ICAC Task Force has received more than 19,500 CyberTips and been involved in more than 203 arrests of sexual predators. Since 2006, the Attorney General's ICAC Task Force has been involved in more than 1,780 arrests of sexual predators. The task force also has provided internet safety training and education to more than 959,000 parents, teachers and students and more than 23,100 law enforcement professionals.