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QUEENS MAN SENTENCED FOR POSSESSING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE MATERIALS

Photo and Video Purchases Traced Through Cryptocurrency Transactions

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Andre Hyman was sentenced today to one to three years in prison for possessing child sexual abuse photos and videos on his personal computer between May 2021 and November 2022, illegal activity traced through transactions Hyman made using cryptocurrency.

District Attorney Katz said: "To those trying to hide their sexual exploitation of children behind a cover of cryptocurrency: We will track you down. We will use every tool available, as we did in this case, and we will find you. This was a genuine team effort and I am grateful for the work done on this case by District Attorney Alvin Bragg's office, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of the Inspector General. Thank you for your commitment to protecting our most vulnerable."

Hyman, 29, of 112th Avenue in Jamaica, pleaded guilty last month to possessing a sexual performance by a child and was sentenced today by Queens Supreme Court Justice Jerry Iannece to an indeterminate sentence of one to three years in prison. As part of the plea, Hyman permanently surrendered eight electronic devices – three cell phones, two laptops and three flash drives -- and will be required to register as a sex offender upon his release.

According to the charges:

- Hyman's activities were discovered as part of an international investigation into the proliferation of online child sexual abuse materials. Local law enforcement partners at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office's Cybercrime and Identity Theft Bureau were alerted to several websites selling child sexual abuse material using Bitcoin addresses. One website in particular advertised access to criminal content in exchange for payment via cryptocurrency.
- Investigators tracked the movement of funds from the website to determine the buyers of the illicit images and videos, pointing them to transactions made via Square, Inc., a mobile payment company now called Block Inc. Subpoenaed records from Square, Inc. indicated Hyman purchased sexually explicit materials involving prepubescent girls.
- Prosecutors from the Cybercrime Unit of the Queens DA's Major Economic Crimes Bureau launched a further investigation into Hyman's bank accounts, strengthening the case, and secured a search warrant for his residence.

- The search conducted by the Queens DA Detective Bureau, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of the Inspector General resulted in the recovery of child sexual abuse material.

Assistant District Attorney Elizabeth Speck, Supervisor of the Cyber Crimes Unit within the DA's Major Economic Crimes Bureau, prosecuted the case, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Catherine Kane, Deputy Chief, Assistant District Attorney Jonathan Scharf, Deputy Chief and Cryptocurrency Investigations Coordinator, Assistant District Attorney Mary Lowenburg, Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard Brave.

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