

Raoul Charges St. Clair County Man With Possession Of Child Pornography

by Submitted by Attorney General's Office
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CHICAGO – Attorney General Kwame Raoul charged a Cahokia Heights man with possession of 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.



The Attorney General's office charged Michael D. Nicholson, 45, in St. Clair County Circuit Court with six counts of possession of child pornography, Class 2 felonies punishable by up to 28 years in prison. Raoul's office also charged him with one count of possession of a firearm by a felon, a Class 3 felony punishable by up to 10 years in prison; two counts of possession of ammunition, Class 3 felonies each punishable by up to 10 years in prison; and one count of being an armed habitual criminal, a Class X felony punishable by up to 30 years in prison. Nicholson is currently being held at the St. Clair County Jail.

"Child exploitation is a devastating crime that leaves survivors and their families dealing with a lifetime of trauma," Raoul said. "These predators must be held accountable, which is why my office will continue to collaborate with state and local authorities so survivors can receive justice to support their healing."

Raoul's investigators, along with officers from the Secretary of State Police and the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department, conducted a search of Nicholson's residence in the 20 block of Circle Creek Lane in Cahokia Heights on Feb. 28. Nicholson was arrested when evidence of child pornography was discovered.

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

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 2023, reports to the ICAC increased by 46% over 2022.

Illinois' ICAC Task Force is one of 61 ICAC task forces throughout the country and is comprised of a network of more than 185 local, county, state and federal law enforcement agencies. Since 2019, the Attorney General's ICAC Task Force has received more than 40,900 CyberTips and has been involved in more than 720 arrests of sexual predators. Since 2006, the Attorney General's ICAC Task Force has been involved in more than 2,010 arrests of sexual predators. The task force also has provided internet safety training and education to tens of thousands of parents, teachers, students and law enforcement professionals.

Attorney General Raoul is reminding the public that child sexual exploitation can be reported online at cybertipline.com and child abuse at dcfsonlinereporting.dcf.illinois.gov. In addition, local child advocacy centers can be found at childrensadvocacycentersofillinois.org.

Assistant Attorney General Jenifer Peck is prosecuting the case for Raoul's High Tech Crimes Bureau.