

NYPD officer accused of keeping child pornography on computer in his Staten Island home

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STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- An NYPD officer from Bulls Head is accused of keeping more than 100 child pornography videos on his home computer.

Peter McLaughlin, 41, who sources say is assigned to the North Shore's 120th Precinct, was arrested Friday morning after an investigation by the federal Department of Homeland Security and a raid on his home.

Authorities allege that he kept the files on his computer between June 26 and Nov. 21 of this year.

McLaughlin admitted as much to authorities, according to a criminal complaint against him, stating that he knew the files depicted children under the age of 15.

It's not clear if his arrest stems from "Operation Caireen," a federal probe of peer-to-peer networks that led to the arrests of 71 people, six of them from Staten Island, earlier this year.

A Homeland Security spokesman declined comment Monday.

That investigation, which unfolded over several months, used investigative software to track files being shared on "peer-to-peer networks" like BitTorrent, Ares and the now-defunct LimeWire.

The Advance ran an in-depth report on May 21 on how investigators went about monitoring these networks.

McLaughlin has been a police officer for nine years, and has been suspended without pay following the arrest, according to an NYPD representative.

Although he was arrested by a federal special agent, he was charged in state court - on 100 counts of possessing a sexual performance by a child, according to information from District Attorney Daniel Donovan's office. That charge carries a maximum prison term of one and a half to four years for a conviction at trial.

McLaughlin was arraigned Friday in Stapleton Criminal Court. Judge Alan J. Meyer ordered him released on his own recognizance until his next court date on Jan. 21.

His attorney, Patrick Parrotta, wouldn't comment on the particulars of the case, noting, "We are waiting for the district attorney's office to break down the forensic evidence on the computer, to see if there's any merit to the allegations."