

Exclusive: Staten Island NYPD officer arrested in child-pornography shocker

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Timothy Martinez, 40, was arrested on Feb. 7 and charged with possession of child pornography. (Staten Island Advance/Paul Liotta)

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- An NYPD officer from Bay Terrace bought illicit images of minors from the account of a Twitter user purporting to be a 14-year-old girl, then a subsequent search of his computer found several hundred photos of child pornography, federal prosecutors allege.

Timothy Martinez, 40, was arrested on Feb. 7 and charged with possession of child pornography, a spokesman for the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York told the Advance.

The arrest comes after the Homeland Security Investigation (HSI) Unit began investigating a Twitter account with an IP based on Staten Island that was interacting with the account of a user that claimed to be under the age of 18 and allegedly paid the minor "in exchange for videos and images containing child pornography," according to an affidavit and complaint filed in support of an application for an arrest warrant.

An HSI special agent later determined, based on data he received from Apple and Charter Communications, Inc., that the Twitter account was associated with Martinez, the complaint alleges.

On Sept. 24, HSI's Child Exploitation Investigation Unit searched Martinez's Bay Terrace apartment and seized a laptop that included over 600 images of child pornography, according to the complaint.

Some of the pictures showed a girl believed to be within the age of eight and 11 with a strap or leash fastened around her neck while performing oral sex on an adult male; another one showed an adult male holding his genitals near a child's buttocks, the special agent detailed in the complaint.

"We are contesting the charges. We have reason to doubt the government's allegations against Mr. Martinez, who has an impeccable background given his history of service to his country and to the community," attorney Angela Lipsman, who is representing Martinez, told the Advance.

Lipsman added that Martinez's legal team has not received any evidence at this time.

Martinez has been a member of the NYPD since 2006, according to public records. He also serves in the U.S. Army Reserves.

The matter is under internal review, a spokeswoman from the NYPD's Deputy Commissioner of Public Information told the Advance.

Martinez is current suspended without pay, the spokeswoman said.

The defendant was released on a \$150,000 bond on Feb. 7, court records show.

It is not clear when his next court date is.