

Child pornography cases increasing in Washington

Few crimes receive as much attention in the media as child pornography charges. If the offender has any occupation that provides access to children, there will be additional pressure on prosecutors to obtain a conviction.

Because these cases have such a high-profile, many of the suspects are presumed guilty before they have an opportunity to offer a defense against the accusations. This can impact a person's entire life - families can be ruined, jobs and professional licenses may be in jeopardy, and this is before any verdict is reached on the charges.

There are federal and state laws banning the creation, possession and distribution of images or videos depicting child pornography, and a conviction may result in significant prison time. Those convicted will also have to register as a sex offender.

Multiple law enforcement agencies may be involved in child pornography investigations. This can include federal or state agencies as well local law enforcement officers. The FBI works in partnership with local Washington

police officers to aggressively target those who create or distribute child pornography.

Law enforcement may employ several different tactics when they are investigating child pornography crimes. In some situations, officers may go online and search for specific filenames that they know are associated with unlawful images. If other users downloaded or shared these images using file-sharing websites, officers may have the information they need to make an arrest.

Other investigatory tactics may have the officer pretending to be someone trying to obtain these types of images online. They may request that certain users send photos or videos, and arrest anyone who complies with their requests.

Police will often serve warrants to obtain Internet search histories or to find other images or videos that the suspect may have collected. Any evidence that is uncovered may be used to strengthen the charges that an individual may be facing.

If you learn that you are the target of a child pornography investigation, it is important to contact an experienced sex crimes defense attorney as soon as

possible. Police may try to discuss these charges with you, and may try to convince you that you need to talk to them to avoid being arrested.

Anything that you say to law enforcement officers at this time can be used against you in court. It is essential that you remain silent, and not speak to any officers or prosecutors unless your attorney is present. You must protect your rights in order to allow yourself an opportunity to build the strongest possible defense against these charges.