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AG Balderas Announces Man Convicted of Possessing Child Exploitation Materials Sentenced To Prison

ALBUQUERQUE, NM---Today, Attorney General Hector Balderas announced that Donald Qualls was sentenced to three years in the New Mexico Department of Corrections for Possession Of Visual Medium Of Sexual Exploitation (Child Under 13). Qualls was apprehended as a result of an investigation into the online sharing of child exploitation materials by the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force of the New Mexico Office of the Attorney General. The Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office executed a search warrant at Qualls' residence, and Qualls admitted to downloading child exploitation materials. Images from 36 known child exploitation series, or sets of previously known child exploitation images, were found on his computer.

"It is critical for us to protect our children, and my office will continue the fight to protect New Mexico's children from online sexual exploitation," said Attorney General Balderas.

Qualls pleaded guilty to possession of child exploitation materials with a one year enhancement for possessing an image depicting a child under the age of 13. Under the terms of the plea agreement, he faced one to six years incarceration at sentencing. The court sentenced Qualls to three years in the New Mexico Department of Corrections. After serving his three year prison sentence, Qualls must serve five years of supervised probation. He faces an additional eight years of incarceration if he violates the terms of his probation.

The case also was brought as a part of the Office of the New Mexico Attorney General's ICAC Task Force mission, which is to locate, track, and capture Internet child sexual predators in New Mexico. The NM ICAC Task Force consists of 89 federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, which is funded by a federal grant through OJJDP administered by the New Mexico Office of the Attorney General. Anyone with information relating to suspected child predators and suspected child abuse is encouraged to contact law enforcement. The case was prosecuted by Assistant Attorney General Jonathan Gardner.

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