



# BCPO News

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**January 16, 2019**

## **Lumberton Man Charged with Possessing Child Pornography**

Burlington County Prosecutor Scott Coffina announced today that a 32-year-old Lumberton Township man has been arrested and charged with possession of child pornography.

John P. DeMerchant, of the first block of Harrogate Drive, was charged January 11 with two counts of Endangering the Welfare of a Child (Second Degree), including utilizing a file-sharing network to possess child pornography.

DeMerchant was released following an appearance in Superior Court, and is forbidden from having unsupervised contact with minors, using social media, and using the Internet except for work purposes. The case will now be prepared for presentation to a Grand Jury for possible indictment.

The investigation began earlier this year after the Prosecutor's Office High-Tech Crimes Unit was notified of DeMerchant's online activities by the Camden County Prosecutor's Office.

He was taken into custody at his residence following the execution of a search warrant during which multiple computers, cell phones, hard drives and other digital media were seized. A preliminary review of the devices by the BCPO High-Tech Crimes Unit detectives revealed more than 1,000 images of child pornography.

The investigation was conducted by the BCPO High-Tech Crimes Unit, with assistance from the United States Immigrations and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, the New Jersey State Police and the Lumberton Township Police Department.

The lead investigator is BCPO Detective Jennifer Applemann. The Prosecutor's Office High-Tech Crimes Unit is a member of the New Jersey State Police Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force and the New Jersey State Police Cyber Terrorism Task Force.

*All persons are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*

**END**

**2019 - 07**