Department of Justice

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DUBLIN WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO HACKING EMAIL ACCOUNTS AND DELETING DOCUMENTS IN DOMESTIC RELATIONS DISPUTE

COLUMBUS – Jamie Staley, 26, of Dublin pleaded guilty in United States District Court here to two counts of computer intrusion for changing the passwords without authorization of the email accounts of others, and for accessing those accounts and deleting emails from them.

Carter M. Stewart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, and Keith L. Bennett, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation Cincinnati Field Division (FBI) announced the pleas entered yesterday before U.S. District Judge Edmund A. Sargus Jr.

According to court documents, Staley was involved in a child support and visitation dispute with her child's father and grandparents in 2008. Without authorization, Staley changed the password to an email account belonging to the child's grandmother. In July 2008, the email provider notified the grandmother of the password change.

Working with the email provider, the victim was able to access her account. Once she reset the password, she discovered that attorney-client privileged emails between her and her attorney regarding the custody and support dispute with Staley had been deleted.

FBI agents obtained a search warrant for Staley's computer and upon investigation determined that Staley had accessed and downloaded documents and email from the email accounts of approximately 16 people including her child's elementary school teacher, and gained unauthorized access to Facebook and MySpace accounts for eight of those 16 people.

Staley pleaded guilty to one felony count of computer intrusion, punishable by up to five years imprisonment, and one misdemeanor count of computer intrusion, punishable by up to one year imprisonment. Judge Sargus will set a date for sentencing.

Stewart commended the FBI agents who investigated the case, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Deborah Solove, who is prosecuting the case.

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