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Former Computer Technician in Georgia Arrested for Hacking into Government Computer Systems in Southern California

A Georgia man was arrested on Friday for hacking into government computer systems used for telephone call centers including the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Service's Child Protection Hotline.

Walter Wiggs, a 44-year-old resident of Douglasville, Georgia, was arrested at his residence by Special Agents of the Los Angeles and Atlanta FBI field offices on federal charges of gaining unauthorized access to a protected computer.

According to the criminal complaint filed in the U.S. District Court in Los Angeles, Wiggs was previously employed as a computer technician for Technology for Business Corporation (TFBC), a Manhattan Beach-based technology corporation. TFBC specializes in developing customized software including an interactive voice response system for telephone call centers. TFBC customers include numerous government agencies and private companies.

Wiggs was laid off from his position as a computer technician for TFBC in June 2003. He subsequently used a computer at his home in Douglasville, Georgia to gain unauthorized access to approximately 13 computers that used TFBC's interactive voice response software including systems used by the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services, City of San Diego, City of Modesto and the Orange County District Attorney's Office.

In particular, Wiggs caused significant disruption to the Los Angeles County Child Protection Hotline from July 1, 2003 through July 4, 2003 by deleting critical configuration files from the system. As set forth in the complaint, the hotline is used by citizens as well as police officers, hospitals, and mental health workers to report cases of child abuse or neglect that require an immediate response. After the system was disabled, callers to the hotline were unable to speak to an agency official or the calls were significantly delayed.

Wiggs made an initial appearance before a U.S. Magistrate Judge in Atlanta, Georgia on Friday and is currently in federal custody.

This case was investigated by the FBI Los Angeles Cyber Crime Division. The prosecution is being handled by the Computer Crimes Section of the United States Attorney's Office in Los Angeles. CONTACT: FBI Spokesperson Cheryl Mimura, (310) 996-3342

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