

AO 91 (Rev. 11/11) Criminal Complaint (Rev. by USAO on 3/12/20)

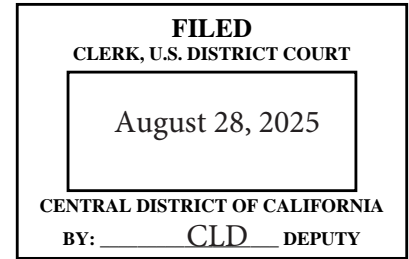
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# UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Central District of California



United States of America

v.

DONG HWAN KIM,  
aka "Ryzen,"  
aka "Ry\_Ry#6688,"  
aka "Lobster,"

Defendant

Case No. 2:25-mj-05322-DUTY

## CRIMINAL COMPLAINT BY TELEPHONE OR OTHER RELIABLE ELECTRONIC MEANS

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date of August 27, 2025, in the county of Los Angeles in the Central District of California, the defendant(s) violated:

*Code Section*

18 U.S.C. § 2252A(a)(5)(B)

*Offense Description*

Possession of Child Pornography

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

*Please see attached affidavit.*

Continued on the attached sheet.

/s/ Anthony Best

*Complainant's signature*

Anthony Best, Special Agent

*Printed name and title*

Attested to by the applicant in accordance with the requirements of Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 by telephone.

Date: August 28, 2025

*Judge's signature*

City and state: Los Angeles, California

Hon. Alka Sagar, U.S. Magistrate Judge

*Printed name and title*

AUSA: David Ryan (\*4491)

**AFFIDAVIT**

I, Anthony Best, being duly sworn, declare and state as follows:

**I. PURPOSE OF AFFIDAVIT**

1. This affidavit is made in support of a criminal complaint against Dong Hwan Kim ("KIM") for a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2252A(a)(5)(B) (possession of child pornography and attempted possession of child pornography).

2. The facts set forth in this affidavit are based upon my personal observations, my training and experience, and information obtained from various law enforcement personnel and witnesses. This affidavit is intended to show merely that there is sufficient probable cause for the requested complaint and does not purport to set forth all of my knowledge of or investigation into this matter. Unless specifically indicated otherwise, all conversations and statements described in this affidavit are related in substance and in part only, and all dates and times are on or about those indicated.

**II. BACKGROUND OF AFFIANT**

3. I am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") and have been employed as such since June 2023. I am currently assigned to a Joint Terrorism Task Force Squad at the West Covina Resident Agency of the Los Angeles Field Office. Prior to my employment with the FBI, I was employed as a sworn municipal police officer in the State of California for twenty-five years, retiring as the police chief. During my career, I have participated in multiple criminal and

national security investigations, to include those involving the use of digital devices and online accounts to facilitate violations of federal law. Through the course of my training and employment as a police officer and with the FBI, I have used a variety of investigative techniques and resources, including the execution of search warrants and review of both physical and digital evidence collected from search warrant returns. I am familiar with the strategy, tactics, methods, tradecraft, and techniques of criminals, terrorists, and their agents. During my employment with the FBI, I attended New Agent Training at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia from June to October 2023. I have received additional formal and informal training from the FBI regarding criminal and counterterrorism investigations, to include training concerning the use of electronic communications and digital devices in furtherance of a crime. In addition, I attended the Orange County Sheriff's Peace Officer Academy in Garden Grove, California from December 1996 to May 1997, and the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia from July to September 2016. As a federal agent, I am authorized to investigate violations of laws of the United States, and as a law enforcement officer I am authorized to execute warrants issued under the authority of the United States.

**III. SUMMARY OF PROBABLE CAUSE**

4. Between 2022 and the present, several minor females have reported that KIM enticed them and other minor females to produce and send him pictures and videos of themselves naked and engaging in sexual acts. The minor females also stated that KIM

would then extort his victims, threatening that he would send the pictures and videos to their family members and others if they did not comply with his demands to send him more pictures and videos.

5. KIM engaged in this conduct as part of his participation in an online network known as "764", a network of nihilistic violent extremists who engage in criminal conduct, including the targeting children for sexual exploitation online, to further the network's goals of accelerating social unrest and the downfall of the current world order, including the United States Government.

6. On August 27, 2025, law enforcement executed a federal search warrant at KIM's residence and found KIM in possession of digital devices containing photographs and videos containing Child Sexual Abuse Material ("CSAM").

#### **IV. STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE**

7. Based on my review of law enforcement reports, conversations with other law enforcement agents, and my own knowledge of the investigation, I am aware of the following:

**A. Background on Nihilistic Violent Extremism ("NVE") and the "764" Network**

8. Based on my training and experience and discussions with other FBI special agents, I understand the following about NVE and "764":

a. Nihilistic Violent Extremists (NVEs) are individuals who engage in criminal conduct within the United States and abroad, in furtherance of political, social, or

religious goals that derive primarily from a hatred of society at large and a desire to bring about its collapse by sowing indiscriminate chaos, destruction, and social instability. NVEs work individually or as part of a network with these goals of destroying civilized society through the corruption and exploitation of vulnerable populations, which often include minors.

b. NVEs, both individually and as a network, systematically and methodically target vulnerable populations across the United States and the globe. NVEs frequently use social media communication platforms to connect with individuals and desensitize them to violence by, among other things, breaking down societal norms regarding engaging in violence, normalizing the possession, production, and sharing of CSAM and gore material, and otherwise corrupting and grooming those individuals towards committing future acts of violence.

c. Those individuals are targeted online, often through synchronized group chats. NVEs frequently conduct coordinated extortions of individuals by blackmailing them so they comply with the demands of the network. These demands vary and include, but are not limited to, self-mutilation, online and in-person sexual acts, harm to animals, sexual exploitation of siblings and others, acts of violence, threats of violence, suicide, and murder.

d. Historically, NVEs systematically targeted vulnerable individuals by grooming, extorting, coercing, and otherwise compelling through force, or the threat of force, the

victims to mutilate themselves or do violence, or threaten violence, to others, and either film or photograph such activity. The members of the network have edited compilation photographs or videos of targeted individuals and shared the photographs and videos on social media platforms for several reasons, including to gain notoriety amongst members of the network, and spread fear among those targeted individuals for the purpose of accelerating the downfall of society and otherwise achieving the goals of the NVEs.

e. NVEs have adopted various monikers to identify themselves. The networks have changed names over time, which has led to the creation of related networks. Although the networks change names and use a variety of different social media platforms, the core members and goals remain consistent and align with the overarching threat of NVE.

f. "764" and related groups are NVEs who engage in criminal conduct within the United States and engage with other extremists abroad. The 764 network's accelerationist goals include social unrest and the downfall of the current world order, including the United States Government. Members of 764 work in concert with one another towards a common purpose of destroying civilized society through the corruption and exploitation of vulnerable populations, including minors.

**B. Background on the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children ("NCMEC")**

9. NCMEC functions as a national clearinghouse for information on missing and exploited children and the sexual

exploitation of children. Electronic Service Providers (“ESPs”) and members of the public can report suspected child exploitation to NCMEC through its CyberTipline. ESPs include companies such as Discord and Meta Platforms, which provide free and paid services online. These services may include email, instant messaging, social networking, and online file transfer or storage. NCMEC provides information to law enforcement agencies through CyberTipline Reports.

10. ESPs may discover suspected child exploitation files through user reports, automated scanning of a hash value<sup>1</sup> associated with a particular file depicting child pornography, and other methods.

**C. KIM Enticed Minor Females to Produce and Send Him CSAM and Other Self-Harm Pictures and Videos**

1. January 2022: MINOR VICTIM 1 Reported KIM Enticed Her to Produce CSAM

11. According to a NCMEC report that I have reviewed, in January 2022, an approximately 18-year-old female who lives in Turkey (“MINOR VICTIM 1”) reported to NCMEC that KIM was using online moniker “RYZEN”, and that KIM groomed MINOR VICTIM 1 when she was 14-15 years old. Specifically, MINOR VICTIM 1 stated that KIM made her do things that would hurt her body and made

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<sup>1</sup> A “hash value” is a numerical identifier for digital data, such as a particular file. It is obtained by using a mathematical function, often called an algorithm. When a hash value is generated for an image file, any other identical image file will have the same hash value. However, if the data is changed, even very slightly (such as the addition or deletion of a single pixel in an image), the hash value will change. Thus, a hash value can be thought of as a “digital fingerprint” for data -- if two images have the same hash value, there is an extremely high likelihood that the images are the same.

his online profile picture a picture of a naked image of MINOR VICTIM 1. MINOR VICTIM 1 stated that KIM also threatened to send naked pictures of MINOR VICTIM 1 to MINOR VICTIM 1's father. MINOR VICTIM 1 provided KIM's name as "DONGHWAN KIM" and his address as "California Downey La Reine Ave 10701," which is consistent with KIM's known residence (the "Downey Residence").

2. February 2022: KIM Solicited CSAM Online

12. According to information provided by a social media application ("Social Media Application 1") in response to a search warrant obtained by the Menomonie, Wisconsin Police Department, on February 4, 2022, KIM, using a now-deleted user account "Deleted User ed14699e#6744,"<sup>2</sup> stated "@everyone any minors willing to show me nudes in my dm for nitro?"<sup>3</sup> I know that KIM was the user of the Deleted User ed14699e#6744 account because (1) records from Social Media Application 1 identify the IP address used in the post identified above, and Charter Communications records show that IP address was subscribed to KIM at the Downey Residence, and (2) the phone number associated with the Social Media Application 1 account was a phone number ending in 6181 ("the 6181 Number"), which according to Verizon records has been subscribed to KIM since October 2020.

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<sup>2</sup> Deleted User ed14699e#6744 was deleted at an unknown point between the February 4, 2022, comment and the Menomonie Police Department receiving the information from Social Media Application 1 in May 2022.

<sup>3</sup> "Nitro" is a paid add-on service that Social Media Application 1 offers which allows a user to access additional emojis, downloads, and other enhancements.

3. April 2022: Anonymous Source Reported KIM Extorted Minors to Produce CSAM

13. On April 10, 2022, NCMEC received two cybertips from an anonymous source who claimed that KIM, whom the tipster identified by true name and by his online monikers "Ry\_Ry#6688" and "RYZEN", was known for extorting and leaking naked images of minors, and operated with two other males, "Coco" or "Cocohen#4069", and A.M.<sup>4</sup>

14. The anonymous source provided KIM's address (the Downey Residence) as well as KIM's phone number ending in 6027 (the "6027 Number"). According to Verizon records, KIM has subscribed to the 6027 Number since January 2021.

4. June 2022: MINOR VICTIM 4 Reported KIM Enticed Her to Produce CSAM

15. I reviewed an email thread sent to an Inglewood, CA, Police Officer in June 2022 from a then-approximately 17-year-old female from Australia, who provided her true first name and the moniker she used on Social Media Application 1 ("MINOR VICTIM 4"). In the email, MINOR VICTIM 4 reported that KIM began sending her explicit messages asking her to show her body and offering to pay her. According to the email, MINOR VICTIM 4 showed KIM her body on camera, and he subsequently posted her personal information publicly. When MINOR VICTIM 4 asked that KIM stop, KIM stated that if MINOR VICTIM 4 did not get naked

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<sup>4</sup> "Coco" and "Cocohen#4069" were usernames used by Jose Henry Ayala Casimiro ("AYALA"). In April 2025, AYALA was arrested by the FBI in Pacoima, CA. He was subsequently indicted for production and possession of CSAM and enticement of a minor to engage in criminal sexual activity. See United States v. Ayala, CR No. 25-283-MCS.

for KIM again, he would send photos and videos of MINOR VICTIM 4 to her father and her workplace. MINOR VICTIM 4 stated that KIM showed a friend of hers one of the videos. A month after MINOR VICTIM 4 went on camera for KIM, edited videos and screenshots were posted on Social Media Application 1 sites that MINOR VICTIM 4 visited, and on other chat forums and websites.

5. August 2022 and February 2025: MINOR VICTIM 2 Reported KIM Enticed Her to Produce CSAM

16. According to a NCMEC report that I have reviewed, in August 2022, an approximately 17-year-old minor female ("MINOR VICTIM 2") contacted NCMEC telephonically to report that KIM was grooming young girls to do things online. According to MINOR VICTIM 2, if the minors did not do what KIM wanted, he would leak photos and videos of them online. According to MINOR VICTIM 2, KIM's youngest victim was 13 years old.

17. In January 2025, FBI Agents interviewed MINOR VICTIM 2 telephonically. MINOR VICTIM 2 said that she first met KIM on Social Media Application 1 when she was 14 or 15 years old (in approximately 2019 or 2020), and KIM would harass MINOR VICTIM 2 on the internet and ask MINOR VICTIM 2 for nude photographs of herself.<sup>5</sup> MINOR VICTIM 2 provided the Downey Residence as KIM's address. MINOR VICTIM 2 said that KIM once sent her a photograph of his driver's license. MINOR VICTIM 2 also recounted an online chat that MINOR VICTIM 2 had been on in which KIM had tried to extort a minor female from Turkey

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<sup>5</sup> MINOR VICTIM 2 did not clearly state whether she provided nude photographs to KIM in response to his demands.

(believed to be MINOR VICTIM 1) with whom he had tried to interact romantically.

6. May 2022, May 2024, and June 2025: MINOR VICTIM 3 Reported KIM Enticed Her to Produce CSAM

18. According to a NCMEC report that I have reviewed, on May 5, 2022, an approximately 17-year-old female ("MINOR VICTIM 3"), reported to NCMEC that KIM, AYALA, and A.M. ran an online server on Social Media Application 1 where they openly created, posted, and traded child pornography, and extorted minors to get nude and write names on their skin, cut themselves, and stick objects such as knives and bottles into their genitals. MINOR VICTIM 3 identified KIM as the user of the username "Lobster" in the server. The NCMEC report included a copy of messages from user "Lobster," in which user "Lobster" stated, "Not going away without leverage," "Uve given me a good opportunity," "I want to be actually be a pedo<sup>6</sup> here and get fucked over eventually. But I still haven't decided how," "Thank you [MINOR VICTIM 3 first name]," "Fucking perfect," and "Okay I need 2 pics and 2 video".

19. According to a NCMEC report that I have reviewed, on May 26, 2024, MINOR VICTIM 3 reported to NCMEC that KIM had groomed MINOR VICTIM 3 online, and had made her take several pictures and videos of herself naked. MINOR VICTIM 3 stated that KIM threatened to send the naked pictures of MINOR VICTIM 3 to her family members. MINOR VICTIM 3 stated that naked pictures of MINOR VICTIM 3 continued to appear online.

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<sup>6</sup> "Pedo" is shorthand for pedophile.

20. On June 9, 2025, MINOR VICTIM 3 was interviewed by an FBI Forensic Child Interview Specialist. According to a report of that interview, MINOR VICTIM 3 said that she had met KIM online during COVID in a 764-affiliated chat server on Social Media Application 1. MINOR VICTIM 3 said KIM would ask her to send him naked pictures of herself, which she did. One day, KIM showed MINOR VICTIM 3 a picture of MINOR VICTIM 3's mother, and her residential address, and threatened her to send more naked photos of herself "doing things." MINOR VICTIM 3 said KIM was a member of 764 and had her write "RYZEN" on her chest. MINOR VICTIM 3 said that KIM specifically wanted pictures of MINOR VICTIM 3's vagina and butt, and KIM wanted MINOR VICTIM 3 to masturbate on video for him. MINOR VICTIM 3 said she was aware of other minor females who would do similar things for KIM. MINOR VICTIM 3 said that KIM went by the online monikers "Ryzen" and "Lobster", and he used the "Lobster" moniker to blackmail her.

7. April 2025: Witness 1 Reported KIM Sought Sexual Relationships with Minors

21. In April 2025, FBI Agents interviewed WITNESS 1 regarding KIM. WITNESS 1 had interacted with KIM online and met up with KIM in person on at least one occasion. WITNESS 1 shared a video of a July 2022 voice chat between KIM and a female who I was able to determine was MINOR VICTIM 3. In the voice chat, KIM told MINOR VICTIM 3 he wanted to take things the "hook-up route" and stated, "You're not going to do anything if I do anything, right?... If we actually do it, you're not going

to say anything, right?... If I had sex with a minor, and people hear about it, I'd be fucked."

22. WITNESS 1 also recalled that she had previously asked KIM if he had been extorting an underage girl in Turkey (believed to be MINOR VICTIM 1), and KIM replied yes, but that he had stopped.

23. WITNESS 1 stated that she went to the Downey Residence in September 2023 to talk to KIM. KIM answered the door and took WITNESS 1 to KIM's garage, where KIM punched WITNESS 1 in the forehead and photographed WITNESS 1's passport.

**D. June 2025: Tipster Reports that KIM is Continuing to Extort Individuals Online**

24. In June 2025, the FBI received a tip from an individual in Australia. The tipster stated that "Ryzen," a known online moniker for KIM, was "sextorting" an associate of the tipster ("MINOR VICTIM 5"). The tipster stated that MINOR VICTIM 5 is now 18 years old, and KIM began grooming MINOR VICTIM 5 when she was a minor. MINOR VICTIM 5 told the tipster that KIM had "sextorted" her and caused her to, among other things, beat her dog so badly it defecated itself. The tipster stated that KIM had begun threatening another individual who had written online about what KIM did to MINOR VICTIM 5, and KIM was presently attempting to extort MINOR VICTIM 5 again as "punishment." I reviewed Verizon records for the 6027 Number between May 1, 2024, and May 20, 2025. The records indicate that KIM's top contact during that period was the number the tipster attributed to MINOR VICTIM 5.

**E. August 27, 2025: KIM Possessed CSAM At His Residence**

25. On August 27, 2025, Special Agents and Task Force Officers of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") conducted a search of the Downey Residence pursuant to a search warrant issued by the Honorable Stephanie S. Christensen, United States Magistrate Judge, in Case Number 2:25-MJ-05164. During that search, Agents seized multiple hard drives, Universal Serial Bus ("USB") drives, and a server from KIM's residence. I and other agents conducted preliminary reviews of certain of those devices, and found the following videos:

a. A video, titled "Screen\_Recording\_20230217-205332\_Bluecord" and dated February 17, 2023, that is 4 minutes and 24 seconds long. In the video, a female who appears to be between 13 and 15 years old, with light brown hair, braces, is depicted naked, with the word "Ryzen" written on her forehead. As detailed above, "Ryzen" is one of KIM's primary online usernames. As the video begins, the female puts earphones into her ear and says "you said that you weren't gonna do that unless I did this." The female then masturbates.

b. A video, titled "Screen\_Recording\_20221010-155536-Bluecord" and dated October 10, 2022, that is one hour, thirty-six minutes, and thirty-three seconds long. In the video, a female wearing a sweatshirt with the name of a known University masturbates with various objects. The female later ties a belt to her neck and a doorknob and masturbates. While the FBI has not identified this minor female, according to a statement provided to the FBI in August 2025 by a known

associate of KIM, the female was 13 years old in approximately 2022.

c. A video, titled "Screen\_Recording\_2022\_0723-224129\_Bluecord" and dated July 23, 2022, that is one hour and thirty seconds long. In the video, an approximately 14-year-old brunette female ("MINOR VICTIM 6") is wearing a black t-shirt inside a bathroom. I was able to identify the female in the video as MINOR VICTIM 6 based on comparing the video with photographs of MINOR VICTIM 6 in law enforcement databases. During the video, MINOR VICTIM 6 takes off her shirt and is completely nude while masturbating with both her fingers and a penis-shaped dildo on the floor of the bathroom. Blood can be seen from MINOR VICTIM 6's vagina, an indication that MINOR VICTIM 6 was menstruating at the time. According to public and law enforcement databases, MINOR VICTIM 6 was born in 2008 and died in a vehicle accident on October 9, 2023.

26. When FBI agents first entered KIM's room at the Downey Residence on August 27, 2025, agents found a desktop computer that was turned on and on which Social Media Application 1 was open to a server showing active chats between KIM and others. Agents reviewed and took photographs of those chats. Based on my review of those photographs, in one chat on August 7, 2025, KIM appears to discuss the video discussed in paragraph 25(c) above that depicts MINOR VICTIM 6. Specifically, in that chat, KIM stated, "I sent u a full recording of [a nickname of MINOR VICTIM 6]..." The other user replied, "the one with the dildo? Yeah u sent that to me on ["Social Media Application 2"] or

["Social Media Application 3"]." KIM later replied, "I gave you a full recording / it was an hour video / of [MINOR VICTIM 6] in restroom." The other user stated, "She was like on her period too." KIM replied, "exactly / her tits were swollen and she was a freak / god I could go for her cunny." The other user stated, "Crazy how u got her to do that on her period..." to which KIM replied, "what can I say / im an og / and as an og / i gave u something no one has seen." As summarized in paragraph 25(c) above, the video titled "Screen\_Recording\_2022\_0723-224129\_Bluecord," which was found on a hard drive in KIM's bedroom, is consistent with the video KIM discusses in this chat. Accordingly, based on my review of the video and chat, I believe KIM caused MINOR VICTIM 6 to create the CSAM video, possessed the CSAM video, and shared the CSAM video with the individual in the chat.

27. In addition to the videos described above, agents executing the search warrant at KIM's residence on August 27, 2025, also found on one of KIM's digital devices a photograph titled, "PXL\_20230824\_214058216" that was taken on August 24, 2023, with a Google Pixel 4 XL. The photograph depicts an approximately 16-year-old female standing naked in front of an Asian male in a bathroom, with the male's arm around the female's neck. Based on my comparison of the photograph with other photographs in law enforcement databases, I was able to identify the female in the photograph as MINOR VICTIM 5, the same minor female about whom the FBI received a tip, as discussed in paragraph 24 above. Based on my review of the

photograph, and my knowledge of KIM and his residence, I believe the male in the photograph is KIM, and the photograph was taken in the bathroom of his residence (the Downey Residence). The FBI seized three Google Pixel phones from the Downey Residence. According to the California Department of Motor Vehicles, MINOR VICTIM 5 was born in 2007 and previously lived in southern California.

28. Additionally, Agents found on KIM's desktop computer a direct message exchange between KIM and a user believed to be MINOR VICTIM 5 on Social Media Application 1. In the exchange, MINOR VICTIM 5 stated to KIM: "before u ever say anything to me, remember that day where u physically abused my dog to the point of him shitting all over my apartment, 'cleaned' him in the shower that im supposed to get clean in, and then proceeded to chase me around until im hiding behind a futon, sodomized me with a hair brush (I still remember how it felt like a knife on fire stabbing me) then you abused and raped me while I disassociated from my body while repeating phrases in my head such as 'dont talk dont talk dont talk' / it was a nice two weeks for forgetting any of that happened." Three hours later, KIM started a voice call with MINOR VICTIM 5 on Social Media Application 1 that lasted a few seconds. MINOR VICTIM 5 later wrote to KIM on Social Media Application 1, "sigh / what do you want bro".

#### **V. CONCLUSION**

29. For all the reasons described above, there is probable cause to believe that KIM has committed a violation of Title 18,

United States Code, Section 2252A(a) (5) (B) (possession of child pornography and attempted possession of child pornography) .

Attested to by the applicant in accordance with the requirements of Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 by telephone on this 28th day of August , 2025.



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UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE  
ALKA SAGAR