



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

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FORMER STATE EMPLOYEE INDICTED FOR STEALING DOZENS OF NEW LAPTOP COMPUTERS MEANT FOR STATE OFFICES

ALBANY – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced the indictment and arraignment of a former State employee accused of stealing 45 brand new laptops from State agencies that instead were sold through a Warren County retail store that advertised the portable computers on Facebook.

Brian Baker, 46, of Route 29, Schuylerville, a former “Information Tech Support II” with the State Office of Information Technology Services, was indicted and arraigned today in Albany County Court on the charges of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Defrauding the Government, both felonies, and Official Misconduct, a misdemeanor. Baker was accused of stealing the laptop computers, worth a total of about \$30,000, from a State office storage facility in Albany throughout 2015. The laptops were all new and still in their boxes.

“For nearly a year this former employee used his State credentials to access and steal dozens of new State computers worth tens of thousands of dollars,” said Inspector General Leahy Scott. “I will continue to use the resources of my office to protect taxpayer property and pursue anyone who so brazenly violates the public’s trust.”

Inspector General Leahy Scott’s investigation uncovered postings on the Facebook page of LGB Computers as well as the South Glens Falls Online Garage Sale group page. The postings, made at various times throughout 2015, noted brand new HP and Dell laptop computers for sale matching the specifications of the computers stolen from the State. The computers were advertised for sale at between \$399 and \$479 each, plus tax, available through LGB and complete with manufacturer’s warranty. Subsequent investigation found several laptops for sale at the LGB Computers store with the same serial numbers of those stolen from the State.

Baker was the lead figure among four charged last November as part of the computer theft and resale ring. Cases against the other three remain pending.

Inspector General Scott thanked the New York State Police for their assistance with the arrests, as well as Warren County District Attorney Kathleen B. Hogan and Albany County District Attorney P. David Soares and their offices for the prosecution of this matter.

The Defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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